


Mumbo Jumbo

By
Henry Clews, Jr.



Mumbo Jumbo



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With love which passeth understanding, I
dedicate this play to the two most valiant,
radiant, generous characters I have ever
known: my beautiful and beloved Mother,
and my beautiful and beloved Wife.

Xmas
1923
-

For Sticks;

One of the
most wonderful persons!
with the sincere
admiration & affection
of his friend.

Gilmer.

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By Way of Introduction

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that one of the most-advertised and "Best Seller" magazine philosophers — Charlie Chaplin's socialistic friend, H. G. Wells or Blasco Ibañez, or some equally illustrious, democratic, literary financier—has declared with the sententious gusto of a furious thinker that the spirit of Gongorism¹ has vanished for all time, I—although I am possibly the only American who is not a member of some "Celebrated Four," "World-Famous Six" or "Immortal Dozen"—nevertheless venture to observe that never has this spirit been so universally rampant as it is to-day.

In previous decadent epochs of unbridled æsthetic luxury, preciosity, which is always the result of pretentiousness, over-specialization, self-consciousness, and falsification of values, was restricted to the court and aristocratic circles of great cities. But in our era of mechanical, serialized, department-store luxury it may be found in every slum and village, with rouged lips, face thickly smeared with youthifying, beautifying powders, and bedizened in Futuristic frock, "Slenderizing Corsette," "Baby-Louis" heels, imitation pearls, near-silk stockings and Cubist coif, tangoing to Dadaist orchestral groans and crashes, with "Decolty" bosom glued to "Society Brand Form-fitting Suitings" of butcher, baker, and candlestick-maker, who, with arms crooked into poses of super-genteel, neurotic vulgarity, lips pursed with sweet squeamishness, and little fingers rigidly extended in manicured elegance, squirm

¹ An affected elegance or euphuism of style, for which the Spanish poet Luis de Gongora and others of his time were noted: called also cultism or preciosity.

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and wriggle with mincing step of Jack gentleman and demi-rep.

As the over-refinement and inbred thinking of the seventeenth century was symbolized in the aristocratic preciousness of madrigal and minuet, so is the over-vulgarity of our mongrel, democratic, comfort-crazed, third sex epoch of super-palace hotel, sex-equality, sillymental socialism, "Elite Toilet Paper," ascetic business and æsthetic plumbing symbolized in the erotic, communal, inverted preciousness of jazz, Cubist art, and free-ass verse, brayed out by neurasthenic *femmes du monde*, or rather *femmes de Ritz*, mental parvenus, refined cooks, cultured bottle-washers, and navel-centric, moon-eyed, pornographic lunatics, suffering from literary claustrophobia, Rimbauditis and Walt Whitmania.

In the present democratic decadence, brought about by mass education, commercial science, and automatic power machinery, which have driven humanity from church and artisan shop into factory, where faith, love, chivalry, dignity, respect, mystery and romance have been ground into dust, cultism is not confined to art, literature and choregraphy: all activities and pursuits have been infected by it, including commerce, politics, laws, sports, athletics, and even science itself.

If in Molière's time it was considered inelegant to refer to a chair as other than a "convenience of conversation"; so would our fastidious "fan" of to-day find it equally crude and ignorant for his "sphere," "orb," "pill" or "pellet" to be simply called a baseball, or his "wand," "scepter" and "sacred willow" a bat. And just as Cathos and Madelon in *Les Pré-*

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cieuses Ridicules re-christened themselves Aminte and Polixène, in like manner has the world-famous idol of the "diamond" emerged from the proletarian chrysalis of George Herman into the romantic biblical maiden-butterfly of "Babe Ruth."

What modern scarlet-coated M.F.H. would not be shocked, and even pained, to have "the waving of hounds' sterns" referred to as the "wagging of dogs' tails"? And would not a fisherman of the Ristigouche élite shudder with indignation at the thought of having "caught" instead of "killed" a salmon?

Latin purists, even at the moment of Rome's greatest degeneration, when her *literati*, through Archaisms, Græcisms, Africanisms, and Plebeianisms, had attained the rarefied summit of pan-ism and perfected incomprehensibility, would appear almost trite in comparison to our baseball scribes, sport savants, social mahatmas, political messiahs, commercial prophets, and art pontiffs, who in the holy press display such amazing knowledge and erudition in the most labyrinthine forms of finical commonness. And as commonness, owing to its complexity, demands infinitely more forethought than does gentle refinement, which springs always from spontaneity and simplicity, it is quite natural that these self-styled "Column-Conductors" or "Colyumists" can only be fully appreciated in their more subtle gradations and symbolic flights of vulgurdulianism by their initiates.

Vulgarity, which begins where faith leaves off, has of necessity become in our epoch of scepticism, unbelief and amorality such a universal cult, that even our bow-wows, dicky-birds, pretty-pollies, pussy-cats and

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other domestic pets seem to be affected by it. I know of one Colyumist, for instance, who has become world-famous through a literary idyll entitled *Archie the Cockroach*. What, I wonder, would Fabre, the "Homer of Insects," that simple, spontaneous poet of poets, have thought of such a choice and euphemistic title as that?

To the gross, smug, precious varieties of vulgarity, which have always existed until recently in comparatively modified phases, the upper urbanites and pharisees of the last century have added vicious, commercial and scientific vulgarity. With these new forms they are endeavouring to maintain their supremacy over the proletariat, which has been so brutalized by machinery, and corrupted by democracy and mass-education, that it can no longer be appealed to or controlled as it was in thoroughbred, aristocratic, pre-power-machine times, by chivalry, nobility of sentiment, and religious idealism—qualities, moreover, almost unknown to the philistine bourgeois, and rapidly disappearing with churchman, artist, craftsman, peasant, aristocrat and soldier.

Machine-science and democracy, by annihilating religion, art, aristocracy, peasantry and soldiery, have dammed off those sources which, when harmoniously intermingled, produce the clearest stream of human happiness. For the soldier, too, has been robbed by science of his brilliant crest and plumage, to be capped instead by a gas mask, and driven like a brown rat into stinking trenches and verminous subterranean dug-outs to such democratic battle-songs as *Madelon* and *Tipperary*; while Mothers, Sisters, Sweethearts,

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and Wives are left behind in serried factory rows to turn out poison bombs, organize charity bazaars, compete for war decorations, work up "Red Cross Drives" with altruistic old men, who fight and rage against "Peace Offensives" and be courted by food and munition profiteers, pacifists, "conscientious objectors," and rotten-hearted professional trouble makers. And while their compatriots are being slaughtered at the front, these last-named hyenas, in lamb-skins of socialism, sneak and prowl about in the rear, with hopes of stirring up revolution, or betraying their country into the hands of the enemy, in order to create chaos, and thereby obtain personal power and political control over a people dazed with anguish, and engulfed in helplessness and despair.

These human reptiles and political scavengers have always existed, but to-day, as in all eras of dissolution, they are as thick as maggots in a cheese. They can only succeed, however, if the ground has been previously prepared for them, as it was in the French and the present Russian Revolution, by renegade aristocrats; for though the plague of revolution breaks out at the bottom, it germinates always at the top, where decadence first appears with unbelief, snobbish sentimental socialism, sex-inversion and preciousness—the four advance agents of social senescence, declination and chaos.

Although the causes of our decadence—the cornerstone of which was laid by James Watt, with his devilish invention of the automatic power machine, destined to uninvent civilization—are quite dissimilar to those of former periods of decay, the results are essentially

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the same; only, instead of remaining localized, and, as I have previously remarked, restricted to a very limited caste, the proletariat and lower middle class of a greater part of the world have now also become contaminated and poisoned.

In France it was the Illuminists, the "Salonaires," and their idols the Encyclopædists, headed by Voltaire and Rousseau—those past masters of mischief-making—who unwittingly encouraged Count Mirabeau to open the doors to the sewage rats who brought in the scourge of revolution. In Russia it was Count Tolstoi, Prince Kropotkin and other decadent nobles who prepared the way for such intellectual sadists and moral idiots as Lenin, Trotsky, Chicherin, Radek and all the other minotaurs and rattlesnakes.

We cannot, alas! boast of aristocrats, but we have, nevertheless, hosts of sentimental, decadent burghers, like Messrs. Wells, Barbusse, Bertrand Russell, and Shaw, who, in beautiful—no, costly—homes (Democrats and socialists are beauty proof, communists and syndicalists are humanity proof), and surrounded by every conceivable luxury (including even Sealyhams, the most expensive of pets), are industriously planning a dazzling Babouvistic future for us. And as "my dear Wells" has declared that "Lenin is beloved of all that is energetic in Russia," you may imagine the future! At all events I am energetic enough to consider this as the most fatuously inhuman and pathologically silly statement ever made outside of a mad-house. "My dear Jones," who seems to be one of the very few regenerate men alive with a fearless pen in one hand and a sword of virile sentiment in the other, will, I am sure,

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not find that I have been too energetic in this statement. *Bis! bis!* Henry Arthur Jones.

Many of our "Salonaires" too, or rather "Saloonaires" and "Ritzonianaires," especially those whose jewels out-glitter their brains, are doing "their bit," and rarely lose an opportunity to announce triumphantly that "the day of the working man is at hand and that he is about to come into his own."

I have often wondered if the "Man in the Mass" realizes to what extent "his proletarianism" is worshipped by these progressive ladies of leisure and pleasure, whose only knowledge of the *filius populi* is through their flunkies, French chefs and chauffeurs, who impress me as having not only "come into their own," but into our own as well!

What is typical of so many of our ultra-modern chic, cosmopolitanized, Carltonized, Citroized, transatlanticized, social-columnized, democratized ladies of fashion is, that when they open their eyes they invariably close their hearts, and when their hearts are open their eyes are shut. This lack of co-ordination between eye and heart, which, by the way, also characterizes modern newspaper and bill-board scientists, would account for the rather surprising fact that our smartest communistic weeklies—the editors of which are invariably to be found in the smartest houses, eating the smartest food and indulging in the smartest conversation—are practically entirely supported by these high-falutin dames, who mercilessly hold their docile sex-shattered masochistic husbands to dollar-grubbing, in order to have larger jewels, larger houses and larger

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dinner-parties, with hopes, no doubt, of thereby furthering the sacred cause of socialism.

It is also in this orchidaceous, super-"spiffy" "*nec pluribus impar*" atmosphere that the germ of sex-inversion or perversion first begins to propagate under such weird "piffle" as sex-equality and women's rights; phrases evidently originally concocted by platonic gentlemen of falsetto voices and plain maidens on the shady side of middle age.

Years ago, a beautiful suffragette, who was suffering from the chic-est mental contagions, endeavoured to convince me that there was absolutely no difference, either mental or physical, between the sexes. She was "carrying on" at the time with her husband and several lovers. I also remember another radiant *penthesilean* who became so incensed at the revolting idea that any possible difference could be considered to exist between man and woman that she armed herself to the teeth with bristling scorn for the poor machine-driven, press-ridden, business-crazed, sex-shackled American male, and rushed from magazine to newspaper, crying out: "Are women people?" Personally I have never thought that those women I admired the most were people, and it would be inconceivable for me to think that the women nearest and dearest to me were merely people, like us men. Then, too, the word "people" smacks of collectivism, which is the antithesis of all that is beautiful, noble, generous, sunlit and inspiring. Of course the collectivist could hardly be expected to agree, for although he is apt to refer to his true love as "soul-mate," in reality he, like the scientist, thinks of her in chemical formulas. Here,

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for instance, is an affectionately domestic inventory, which I have just come across, by a collectivist and modern scientific lover, who declares that his wife with eleven of her friends contain sufficient hydrogen to inflate a balloon of a thousand cubic metres, capable of lifting three or four people. He further illuminates our fancies with the assurance that in his wife there is sufficient carbon to manufacture sixty-five gross of pencils, enough phosphorus to tip eight hundred thousand matches, iron for seven large nails, and fat to produce thirteen pounds of candles.

Doctor Louis Berman of Columbia University, who declared with ecstasy that "the chemistry of the soul" was a "magnificent phrase," will probably have another attack of scientific ecstasies if he ever comes across this rhapsody of domestic wealth, which sounds to me more like a pork-packer's evaluation of one of his swine than a husband's appreciation of his wife. But then, of course, I am hopelessly unscientific—in fact, so hopelessly unscientific that I am very sceptical about the experiment which Doctor Hereward Carrington, Director of the American Psychical Institute Laboratory of New York, proposes to make on an anæsthetized cat to determine whether it has a soul. In describing the experiment Professor Carrington says: "We shall place a cat in a glass box just large enough to hold it. This box will then be placed in another glass box five inches larger. The air in the space will be reduced. If the astral body exists, little electrical particles will condense on the surface of the astral body, like dew-drops on the grass."

I don't know why it is, but every time I think of

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Doctor Carrington and his dewdrops on a cat's soul—
and I think of him much more than is good for me, I
fear—the following lines repeat themselves over and
over again in my mind:—

“The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand;
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
‘If this were only cleared away,’
They said, ‘it WOULD be grand.’”

A psycho-analyst could, no doubt, explain why the
Walrus, the Carpenter and Doctor Carrington have
become inseparable in my subconsciousness.

Notwithstanding the fact that many of my sex have
been obliged to dock their combs, clip their spurs,
cluck, and even grow hen feathers, I am nevertheless
endeavouring to hold on with might and main to all
the blessings and sex differences which I received from
the hands of the Creator through my well-beloved
parents, and I only hope and pray, with all the fervour
and power of my instinctively uncollectivistic and
passionately sex-differentiating nature (even as to
gnats), that I shall always be able to greet His dawn
until the day of my death with crest, spur, and at
least one cock-a-doodle-doo, even if my crowing does
awaken scorn and ridicule among the sleek-sex-equality
capons, communistic cuckoos, and sentimental guinea-
fowl, who seem to be increasing to an alarming
extent.

Not so long ago I remember meeting a combination
of all three who had been so completely shorn of every

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vestige of cockdom that he actually resented having his charming little blonde hen addressed as "Mrs.," claiming that a husband had no right to ask his wife to renounce her maiden name. Consequently, ever since their marriage, this super-modern epicenian pair of soul-mates have been pecking and clucking about together as Mr. Rooster and *Miss* Hen.

Recently I even heard of a case where an exquisitely beautiful little matron pullet absolutely insisted on being addressed by all her friends as Mr. Cocka-lorum. A strange anomaly indeed! but highly significant of our juiceless, sexless, joyless, standardized world of to-day, where men have turned from romance, individualism, religion and art, to science, collectivism, self-exploitation, and the power machine.

I can think of no more pathetic and strikingly pitiful sight than a group of stark and wild-eyed militant suffragettes flagellating themselves into sex-frenzy, not, as is generally thought, to obtain the vote—about which women will always remain indifferent—but in reality to goad decadent, mechanized man into his former sense of chivalry, and reawaken, reflare in him the smouldering romantic sex-interest, through which women had inconceivably more influence than they now have by suffrage. For they then directed and even controlled those in power with God-given sex-attraction, instead of with merely man-given vote.

I feel sure that the Turkish ladies of the harem are much happier than are our enfranchised love-lorn ladies, who have been encouraged and allowed by sub-men to vote away their divine influence over super-men. The hard, thin, compressed mouth with drooping corners

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and the shrill, nasal, querulous voice of the average American woman are tragic tell-tales of her unrequited desire for companionship, love and romance, and the utter sexlessness of her life. I am, however, convinced that, even among the most progressive and Amazonian of our little hens (excluding those, naturally, with androgynal clucks), there is not one who would not drop her vote in the dust and go skedaddling back to romantic pre-power-machine days were she to hear the triumphant trumpeting call of a troubadour cock. But as the unfortunate little twentieth-century pullet is now awakened by a factory whistle, or at best by the patented mechanical crow of a standardized, democratic cock, far be it from me to blame her for pecking about for votes in the modern barn-yard of concrete and corrugated iron.

Although the air vibrates with assertions that there is little, if any, difference between the sexes, I shall continue nevertheless to think, feel and dream that there exists a world, nay, a universe, of glorious, triumphant, beautiful, exotic, supreme, exquisite, mysterious, infinite, everlasting difference, and it is this divine difference which has given us love, hope, art, life—God.

But let us now resume our analogies of past and present expressions of Gongorism, or self-conscious affectation, which, as I have pointed out, appears with the three already indicated forms of social degeneration.

How enchanted, for instance, would the Cicisbei and their Mistresses of the Italian *precioso* period have been with Gayne Adolphus Baron de Meyer's esoteric photographs of ritualistic powder-puffs, sacramental lingerie,

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and ceremonial hosiery, which this recondite artist suffuses with mystical light, and reproduces over millions of magazine pages for the enlightenment and uplift of millions of beholders. We will quote from one of those millions of uplifted admirers who, on this occasion, has alighted on *Harper's Bazar* to warble in full-throated rhapsody over the genius of our Baron: "Sometimes there blows down on the planet, from the winged winds of destiny, a personality whose force of character . . . an intellectual divination, which penetrates to the hidden soul of living human beings with the discriminating ability to make this spiritual entity vital and articulate."

Could Marsden Hartley, our informal adventurer in the arts, who informs us that "We have dispensed once for all with the silly notion that a work of art is made by hand," and that "Art is a matter of scientific comprehension," lilt with more "orchidaceous rarity" about one of his pet photographers or "æsthetes of muscular melody"? But listen to what that mischievous practical joker, Francis Piccabia, did to poor little Marsden when he caught him on his hobby-horse rocking through the Arts "with the easy grace that becomes any self-respecting humorist," *en route* for *The New Republic*, *The Nation* or *The Freeman*, and taught him the following "flap-doodling" "spoofalistic" "Dadaism," or rather Gagaism, which Marsden now solemnly recites in public, believing that "Dada is a fundamentally religious attitude, analogous to the scientist with eyeglass glued to the microscope" (glass eye glued to microscope would be still more fundamental, Marsden dear):

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"Dada smells of nothing, nothing, nothing.

It is like your hopes: nothing.

Like your Paradise: nothing.

Like your idols: nothing.

Like your politicians: nothing.

Like your heroes: nothing.

Like your artists: nothing.

Like your religions: nothing."

"A litany like this," declares Marsden, "coming from one of the most notable Dadaists of the day, is too edifying for proper expression." It was, however, most unfair of Piccabia not to have told Marsden that he had cribbed the above from a poem entitled the *Salt Herring*, written in Paris almost a half century ago:

"To make all serious men mad, mad, mad.

And to amuse children little, little, little."

It seems to us that Marsden, like most of our boy-scouts in the Arts, is becoming almost too adventure-some, for if Dada has been able to charm him into thinking that "nothing is greater than anything else," and "that the charm of Dadaism exists mainly in the fact that they wish all things levelled in the mind of man to the degree of commonplaces," what would happen were he and his Boswell, Mr. Waldo Frank, to be suddenly confronted with a "Boojum"?—which is an infinitely more dangerous bird than the commercial, domesticated Dada, so popular at present with the modern "Arty" cultist bourgeois who "senses effluvia of souls," interprets "psychism of patterns" and "is vastly oversize as to experience in the spiritual geometric of the world."

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I have often wondered if the Bellman had a prophetic realization of the enormous influence he was destined to wield over modern art and literature. As our most famous contemporary artists, poets and critics have inspired themselves with his genius, and as he was the undoubted founder of our modern art schools of "ists" and "isms," I shall quote a few stanzas from his speech made on presenting his marvellous map to the crew—"a map they could all understand."

"The Bellman himself, they all praised to the skies—
Such a carriage, such ease and such grace!
Such solemnity, too! One could see he was wise,
The moment one looked in his face!

He had bought a large map representing the sea,
Without the least vestige of land:
And the crew were much pleased when they found
it to be
A map they could all understand.

'What's the good of Mercator's North Poles, and
Equators,
Tropics, Zones, and Meridian Lines?'
So the Bellman would cry: and the crew would reply
'They are merely conventional signs!

Other maps are such shapes, with their islands and
capes,
But we've got our brave Captain to thank'
(So the crew would protest) 'that he's bought us
the best,
A perfect and absolute blank.'

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This was charming, no doubt: but they shortly
found out
That the Captain they trusted so well
Had only one notion for crossing the ocean,
And that was to tingle his bell."

Methinks I hear in that "tingle" the charlatanism, propaganda, self-exploitation and self-conscious preciousness of our epoch.

"Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And we all went unto thee, O Lewis Carroll! And you filled our playrooms with sunbeams, and our hearts with merriment, and later, much later, our minds with the light of your immortal lay and supremely unscientific philosophy:

"Ah! cruel tree: if I were you,
And children climbed me, for their sake,
Though it be winter, I would break
Into Spring blossoms, white and blue!"

Poor Wilde in this poem expresses with rare beauty the unscientific longing of many of us, but the joyous miracle of breaking in mid-winter into Spring blossoms, white and blue, was reserved for you, Lewis Carroll!

But as this is supposed to be a Foreword, I must, as Marsden would say, glue myself to the subject, although I am amazingly far, as any fool may see, from being a scientist,¹ who, like a barnacle, is so full

¹ As the word science is derived from *scire*, to know, I have always been flabbergasted at the thought of any man having the stupendous cheek to call himself a scientist.

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of natural glue that he cements himself to the first accepted fact in sight, thinking it a rock of truth. His rock of truth, however, usually turns out to be seaweed or rotten log, or ship's bottom.

Carlyle, in his intellectual cruises, must have observed quantities of such barnacles clinging to the sides of his ship as he gazed down into "the great deep sacred infinitude of nescience, whither we can never penetrate, on which all science swims as mere superficial film."

I shall therefore continue by asking you, gentle reader, if the *Æsthetes* of Versailles were ever gathered around a Clodion or Falconet with more delicate and exquisite appreciation than are our modern beatifically scientific connoisseurs in pictured magazine advertisements around "Louis Thirteenth" or "Hepplewhite Cabinet Phonographs"; "Super-refined Select Patri-cian Motor-Cars," "Parnassian Bath-tubs of Snow-drift Enamel" and "Olympian Silentium Water-Closets" in "Motor and Plumbing Salons."

Our illustrative artists of luxe, aristocratic exclusiveness and chic, are also brilliantly supported, with choice word and elegant phrase, by our pedants of publicity, advertising the very latest sartorial, gastronomical and beautifying perfection, "savouring of high breeding and fashion's tiptoe mood of happy anticipations"; as well as every conceivable kind of domestic comfort-contrivance, "which no gentlemen's home *en rapport* with best and smartest benefit of discrimination may be without."

How inspiring, for instance, for an initiate of "Golf-olatry" to find in magazine art a "Golf-garbed-by-

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Specialist" brother of his belief, wearing "Expressions in Bootery," and bending in contemplation over a "Kinæsthetic Progress Ball, a Gift that carries Distinction," and to know that in his "Golf Sanctum," depicted in the distance, cool drinks are awaiting him in "Puritan Polar Bear Ascetic Refrigerators of Opalite Glass"; probably thus named not to arouse the attention of Billy Sunday's over-sensitive anti-alcohol "Breath Tasters."

Were Luther to return to earth, he would, I think, discover ere long that more ritual exists in the Golf Chapels of to-day than in the Church of his time; and on finding religion to be a dead issue, and golf a very living one, he would undoubtedly start a reformation movement of Golf Protestants, and put a ban on the luxury of being garbed by specialists; suppress caddy acolytes; discontinue cheating dispensations given to the richest club-members; dispense with votive offerings of silver cups; and not permit his followers to indulge in more than two wiggle-waggles while addressing the sacred ball.

These restrictions would unquestionably come as a blessing to a great number of fervents who are suffering from golf preciousness. I know of innumerable cases, not only among the congregations, but also among the higher dignitaries of this sport, who have become quite ill from the apprehension of "Hoodoo Holes." There are some, too, who become depressed by sunshine owing to the unfortunate habit of looking for their shadows as they start to drive. There are others who arrive at such hyper-sensitiveness that even a whispered word by an onlooker, at the moment of

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play, may throw them into despair. But those who are unable to control their number of wiggle-waggles, and finally feel themselves compelled to search for imaginary impediments around the ball, suffer, I am told, the keenest of tortures.

Had Dante ever seen them he would, I feel sure, have added eternal wiggle-wagging to his list of punishments in the *Inferno*.

Our statesmen, or rather politicians, of big and little stick (statesmen are only produced by monarchical systems),¹ are, however, not to be outstripped by our advertising bards and pictorial psychologists in intimate, sweet, and even amorous solicitation of public opinion. Few monarchs have been able to inspire their courtiers with such tender ingratiating smiles of sensuous sycophancy as are worn for mob and kodak by our political courtesans, who, with saccharined oratory of sentimental proletcultural vulgarity, and chattering, flattering familiarity, fish for votes from slum and gutter with hearts, eyes, and stomachs overflowing with love for "the plain people."

Humorously enough, "the plain people" are now far from considering themselves plain. In fact, I even fear that the vain, avaricious little political jackals, who for years have been "playing big" in Teddy-Bear and Royal Bengal tiger-skins, while stuffing the proletarian goose with succulent lies of democratic hypocrisy and emotional refuse scooped out of literary kitchens of unsuspecting "ladies and gentlemen bountiful,"

¹"Egoism and jealousy are the sources of democracy, which is the cradle of mediocre politicians who, having obtained their votes through charlatanism, are never respected by the mass."

—RENAN.

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are not only going to be done out of their tit-bit, but gobbled up themselves by a "really-truly" Lenin-Trotsky wolf. This crafty, rapacious brute has already gotten a whiff of the enormous *pâté de fois gras* of folly, vanity, ignorance, and pitiful credulity in store for him.

The Bessie Beattys, Clare Sheridans, Mrs. Snowdens and other parlour coveys of manicured, pedicured, hair-waved, jewelled, perfumed, exquisite, beautiful, high-born, high-brow ladies of satin, silk, lace lingerie, brocades and *Soviet sable coats*, whose tender, bolshevized, precious, mundane hearts are constantly breaking in magazine, newspaper, novelette, and autobiography over love of humanity, plain people, and man in the mass, are no doubt eagerly anticipating the above feast of truffles and *foie gras* at which, as ladies-in-waiting, they will be able to re-thrill at the ravishing sight of "those sensitive speaking hands of a musician," and again lose themselves in "that eternal look" in which Bessie tells us in *The New Republic*, "there was something magnificent . . . high like mountain peaks, strong, sure, enduring." Alas! lovely lady, if you failed to attain similar heights in Chicherin's eyes (which is highly probable since you still live to tell the tale), you certainly have attained snow-peaks in mine, for as I gaze up at you in bewildered admiration from the nadir of my valley of shadow, I see that you have ascended in your article on Chicherin to such a rarefied atmosphere of quintessential sentimentality that only New Republican climbers could possibly breathe in it without being seized with altitudinous nausea.

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With your most gracious permission, I shall take the liberty of quoting the following passage from your article:—"The Red soldier outside his (Chicherin's) door set to guard him sometimes falls asleep. The Commissar passes him on tiptoe and says: 'Sh!! he is sleeping,' to anyone who walks noisily."

It is certainly now Clare's turn to trot out Trotsky, her altruistic "man of wit, fire and genius," her "magnetic chord to Moscow," her "Napoleon of peace"! Poor Mrs. Snowden and her guileless socialistic suffragetic Philip will no longer be able to repeat their little "stunt" with Lenin, for apparently they have since discovered that what they mistook for love of humanity in their hero's eyes was the gleam of paranoia, or manic-depressive insanity, brought on by over-indulgence in blood lust and excessive delight in torturing his helpless compatriots. It is enough to give the world manic-depressive insanity to think of the millions of innocent victims who have already been slaughtered, starved and fiendishly done to death to gratify the degenerate whims of this sadistic monster, who was recently compared to Jesus Christ by an amazingly fashionable lady writing in an amazingly fashionable magazine. And with untold millions of his countrymen under blood-soaked clod, and the surviving ninety millions living in anguish and horror. Anatoly Maryngoff, a mechanized little hirudine communist, excretes with wriggling parasitical delight the following lines over the May number of *Broom*:—

"We trample filial reverence under foot

.

Mumbo Jumbo

To Hell! Our red cancan is a splendid sight

Is not yesterday squashed like a pigeon
Under an automobile
Rushing madly from a garage?"

But before taking leave of you, my bonnie, Bolshevic Bessie, may I suggest that you and your *New Republic* look into certain works on pathology, wherein you will find accounts of blood-dripping demons, who, after having fondled and tenderly caressed their victims, calmly and deliberately tortured them to death; and then with "Sh! he is sleeping," "left the room on pointed feet, smiling that things had gone so well," like the barber of Meridian Street. No doubt they, like Chicherin, considered themselves uplifters and saviours of the human race.

I do hope that you and yours will follow my suggestion, for, if not, I fear that in the next issue of *The New Republic* we will probably be told by another fair fashionable "Red Heart" specialist how Chicherin and Trotsky, with tear-stained cheeks, pass hand in hand from slaughter-house to torture-chamber, exhorting their Jack Ketches and Chinese executioners to

"Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young and so fair!"

Oh! Bessie! I have just seen an entire newspaper page advertising in enormous letters a book entitled, *How Little Social Errors Ruined Their Biggest Chance.*

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Do get it and pass it on to *The New Republic*, for I feel that that "Journal of Opinion" lacks at times the personal and "human, all too human" touch of *Town Topics* and *The Club Fellow*; otherwise I find these smart social weeklies amazingly similar in their outlook on humanity.

Our prize-fighters, too, whose views on philosophy, domestic love, art and politics are published broadcast, and are now being "broadcasted," come in for gushing streams of euphuistic adoration and forests of newspaper fame. It would be interesting to know how many hundreds of thousands of beautiful trees have already been sacrificed and turned into machine pulp, to be vomited out by the juggernaut printing press in glorification of such modern heroes as Dempsey¹ and Carpentier.

Of Siki, the negroid slugger who dethroned Carpentier, we know little as yet,² but it will not be long before the Press will be giving us, in editorials, his family history and his thoughts, not only on life, but on after-life as well. He has, I hear, recently honoured

¹ In the February number of *Vanity Fair*, two entire pages are consecrated to "Dempsey's Olympian Attributes." Our Olympian critic Heywood Broun writes: "Like another Siegfried, Dempsey had come through all the dangers which were reared to make him keep his distance. . . . Dempsey paid his tribute to the Brunhilde of the occasion with right hand punches to the jaw." What modern Olympianism! There are photographs too of Dempsey's hands, fists, and forearms "showing the combined strength of these dangerous and effective weapons." On the opposite page, Dempsey is posed as a "Penseur." Most of our "Penseurs" and critics, methinks, should be posed as Dempseys.

² Since writing the above, this ebullient, ebony negro has become one of the most conspicuous men on earth. His views and statements are cabled around the world.

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an ambassadorial luncheon with his midnight presence.

At this moment the front pages of the French Press are devoted to propagating the fame of a certain ogre who is now on trial for his life and will soon become an international figure for having raped, slaughtered, Trotskied, quartered and Lenined a little girl of six to satisfy his delirium of demoniacal passion. Think of how many lovely Socialistic ladies, callous cads, pedantic, perfumed prigs, modern poetasters, artists and smart newspaper editors would now be prostrating themselves at his feet in adoration of his Apollonian genius in uplifting humanity had he butchered ten thousand little girls instead of one! As it is, we may soon expect to see in the Press love-letters and poems written to him by his Bolshevic sympathizers and admirers. Let us hope that this beast's lawyer will not be inspired to defend this hideous crime by placing it on a political basis, for otherwise the head of his monstrous client will most probably drop into the Hall of Fame instead of into the basket of the guillotine.

Proudhon, descendant of Hebert and Clootz, and grandfather of Bolshevism, who declared that "God is folly and cowardice; God is evil," and his worthy disciple, Bakunin, whose celebrated toast was: "To the destruction of all law and order, and the unchaining of evil passions," are unquestionably tickled to death with this crime, the minutest details of which they have surely received by radio in Hades, where they are now, with all their gang, probably bumping bumpers over it with Lucifer.

The smartest lady I ever met told me not long ago, at the smartest dinner I ever attended, that she "simply adored Proudhon," whom she considered "a perfectly

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marvellous genius and the most progressive spirit of the nineteenth century." An hour later, with her *dernier cri* skirts above her knees, she was progressively shimmy-shaking in a casino with her slick and sleek professional dancing partner, while her sex-equality, democratic husband was slowly but surely progressing out of sight under the table.

As a single day's issue of a great "Daily" involves the destruction of a thousand trees, I shall leave it to you, fair reader, to calculate how many have been recently razed to the ground to provide the world with the most intimate and sensational details of America's latest and smartest divorce scandal. And now that every town, village, and mining camp has its "Smart Set," the forestry department had better turn its attention to the ever-increasing "Society News" and "Social Items" which are causing more havoc in our forests than fires.

I once calculated that it cost at least one hundred and fifty thousand trees to instruct the masses in the life of Harry Thaw.

One day last spring I fell asleep under a spreading oak, in the cool shade of a luxuriant grove, when suddenly I was awakened, not by the full-throated song of a thrush, but by the diabolical shriek of a sawing machine. As it was at the time of Fatty Arbuckle's trial, it occurred to me that probably in a few days all this fairyland of light, shadow, leaf, and branch would be transmuted into millions of newspaper pages describing and illustrating every incident of Fatty's career from the time of his birth.

What a tremor of apprehension must have passed through the beautiful trees of France when the first

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page photograph of Desiré Landru appeared in the French Press surrounded by ten of the wives whom he had butchered. And think how every forest must wail with alarm at the approach of Messrs. Hearst, Pulitzer, and Viscount Rothermere.

I have often questioned what will happen when there is no longer a sufficient amount of timber to furnish newspaper pulp for the ever-increasing number of world-famous geniuses. I suppose the laws of natural adjustment will then take care of such a dramatic situation, for when everyone becomes celebrated (which is not far off), those who are the most celebrated will undoubtedly endeavour to become nonentities in order to distinguish themselves from the rest, and "The Hall of Fame" will be superseded by "The Hall of Obscurity," wherein the "Friends of Music" will be called upon to organize choral societies to chant:

"How stupid to be somebody!
How public, like a frog,
To croak your name the livelong day,
To an admiring mob."

For those who prefer forests to newspapers, it must be extremely distressing to see their beloved trees rapidly disappearing into machine pulp to be transmuted into untold millions of tons of chronicled lies, gossip, scandal, criminality, pole-cat politics, self-exploitation, charlatanism, baseball, sport, social items, nostrums, and artful advertisements,¹ for the general enlighten-

¹ "The freedom of the press may be regarded as a permission to sell poison—poison for the heart and the mind. There is no idea so foolish, but that it cannot be put into the heads of the ignorant and incapable multitude."—SCHOPENHAUER.

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ment and education of the masses, who seem to absorb with amazing facility such carefully prepared instruction and uplift, calculated to warm the cockles of their hearts with sensations of progress, civilization, and superiority.

I am convinced that Luis de Gongora himself could not have equalled Miss Neysa McMein's dainty rhapsody over Carpentier (the most newspapered and magazined "he-man" of the twentieth century, except perhaps Charlie Chaplin, Maréchal Foch, and Desiré Landru),¹ when "that beautiful person" appeared before her in a "wonder white bathrobe thing with curious Javanese figures. Angelo would have fainted with joy at the beauty of his profile. . . . His imaginative sensitive hands, with beautiful oval nails . . . might have

¹ The following are extracts from columns which appeared in the press, a year after Landru's execution: "Paris is to own Landru's stove. The notorious cookery stove in which Landru roasted his numerous wives, was sold by auction to-day for 4,200 francs, after brisk bidding. Candidates even wrote from the Netherlands offering large sums, and for the hour during which the stove was on view, it was photographed from every possible point of view by countless operators with cameras. All objects directly recalling the crimes committed at the lone house at Gambais were in great demand. These included locks of hair belonging to the unfortunate women whom Landru despoiled and murdered, articles of female attire, combs, etc. Landru's seal with his initials fetched 400 francs. The stove was put up at 500 francs; bidders ran up the figures rapidly to 4,000 francs. On the other hand, the shabby little purse which he had in his pocket when arrested made only 35 francs, which seems cheap for so personal a souvenir of a historic character."

It is doubtful, in this chaos of decadence, if the stove which warmed our glorious Marshal Foch who led ten million troops to victory, will ever reach such a figure.

Two weeks later: "Landru's kitchen stove has been resold to an Italian collector in Turin for 30,000 francs." O tempora! O mores!

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belonged to anyone from Napoleon to Whistler! And his legs!'" etc., etc.

This is but a feather of ecstasy from tons and tons of similar panegyrics. But let us not overlook our pacifist, socialist, and ostrich-like sentimentalist, Mr. Bernard Shaw, who, after comparing Carpentier to Charles the Twelfth, dramatically exclaims at the ring-side, from the vantage of a ten-pound seat: "Genius could not be more unmistakable!" Would Carpentier say as much of Shaw? I wonder! I believe the author who etherialized psychothenic maudlinism in *Pelleas and Mélisande* even out-pointed Shaw in Carpentierism.

Undoubtedly Cachin's acolyte, Anatole France, would have surpassed the above transvaluists in superlative appreciation of his prize-ring compatriot, had he not been absorbed in worship before the shrine of Bolshevism, where he was heard to exclaim, with the Nobel Prize in his pocket: "I adore Lenin, because he works for the good of humanity." And this from Anatole, who, with jewelled pen, and surrounded by priceless works of art, consecrates in the perfumed precincts of the Avenue du Bois his life to proving that humanity is not worth working for.

I fail, however, to understand why so many of our modern altruistic Progressives, who have apparently advanced beyond normalcy, should prefer the "All Lowest" to the "All Highest," not only in religion and statecraft, but in art and all other crafts as well.¹

¹ "I do hope the reign of benevolence is over; until that event occurs, I am sure the reign of God will be impossible," declared Henry James, Sen., over sixty years ago. What would he have said to the benevolent reign of Bolshevism?

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Personally, as I find that art, like honey, only attains perfection under religious and monarchical institutions, I, like the bees, fundamentally believe not only in the divine right of King and Queen, but in the divine right of Pope, Caliph, and artist too, which, after all, is purely and simply a normal biological belief in normal biological rights. As every normal man by nature and instinct is a monarchist, it stands to reason that the democratic doctrine has been foisted upon him by energetic, mesmeric, unscrupulous bell-wethers, who are immune from pity and ever ready to perpetrate the most contemptible trick in order to gratify their personal vanity, and obtain, through flattery and mob-sycophancy, control of the mass.

It is as unnatural and uninstinctive to have a mob-elected President as it would be for a hive to have a president bee. Let us hope that the bees will not contract the malady of our epoch and substitute democracy for monarchy; for in such an event we may expect from them tabloids of adulterated saccharine instead of nectar from the flowers of the field.

I can think of nothing more satanically monotonous and evilly dismal than a world without class distinctions and populated with communal processional human caterpillars, even were they all uniformly glossy, chic, smart and "spiffy"; for I consider that the principal purpose of civilization is to create not only class distinction, but solid class barriers, in order to give the humans inspiring and invigorating desires and possibilities of peeping and, when ability permits, of jumping from one enclosure into another. They are thereby supplied with emotions of romance, hope, exaltation,

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mystery, picturesqueness, respect, awe, reverence, and all the other qualities and sensations based on social differences which are fundamentally essential to the happiness, amusement and mental health of humanity; and without which any society will in time degenerate into dullness, viciousness, brutality and chaos.¹

The stylized, solicitous family butler, who, alas! is rapidly disappearing, is one of the few remaining symbols of civilization, and unless we are at least able to retain him, it will not be long before we will be waiting on ourselves in the jungle, for without him and his traditional mutton-chop whiskers or smooth-shaven face—an insignia of service of which every honest servant is proud—there can be no art or culture. I know of a charming Virginian family living in Nice who fully appreciate this fact; and I have met few who are doing more to uphold the traditions of true civilization than is their faithful, aged butler, Enrico.

If French sociologists, political economists and ministers of fine arts would only realize the enormous importance, even from a purely commercial point of view, of preserving the Dundreary whiskers of their obsequious (in the best sense of the word) *maîtres d'hôtel*, they would devote more attention to their culture and growth and less attention to the coif of such

¹“The monarchical form of government is natural to man. Even the solar system is monarchical. A republic is as unnatural as it is unfavourable to the higher intellectual life and the arts and sciences. . . . There is always a numerous host of the stupid and the weak, and in a republican constitution it is easy for them to suppress and exclude the men of ability, so that they may not be outflanked by them. . . . In a monarchy, talent and intelligence receive a natural advocacy and support from above.”—SCHOPENHAUER.

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unprepossessing-looking "comrades" as Cachin, Longuet, Herriot and *toute leur bande*.

Personally, I would infinitely prefer to wear flamboyant Dundrearies and serve others than live in a community where all service was taboo. I would even sooner choose to be born in Uncle Tom's cabin (In reality, Uncle Toms,¹ Aunt Elizas, Sambos, pickaninies and mammies were far happier in the aristocratic F.F.V. days of *My Old Kentucky Home* and *Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party* than in these days of *You're some Cutie and you've got me vamped*) than live in a state where liberty, equality and fraternity were realities and not pure illusions, as they are and always will be.² For with our present mental equipment, which for many thousands of years has certainly not improved, I can think of no greater moral and physical bondage than the Utopia conceived of by our modern Utopians.

I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that butletorial side-whiskers are of much greater importance—for the moment, at any rate—to the safeguarding of European civilization than is the Luxembourg Museum, which is rapidly becoming proletcultured, or the august assembly of the Académie Française, where Demos has already begun to "butt in."

¹ When Harriet Beecher Stowe, who was a New England sentimentalist, wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, she had never been farther south than Cincinnati, and consequently, like most of the Mayflowering Yankees of her day (and since her day as well), was entirely ignorant of the refined, chivalrous, generous, happy civilization of the South.

² "The strengthening and elevation of the human race always involves the existence of slaves."—NIETZSCHE.

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Although the word democracy is the largest, ugliest and most grotesquely ornate receptacle of salivary vulgarity, mawkishness and hypocrisy in the dictionary, there are comparatively few men of to-day who would not with a cringing gesture of mob-servility hold it to their lips and drink deep from it in order to quench their thirst for popularity with the mass, which democrats despise in proportion to their elevation above it. As the moral health, entertainment and happiness of the proletariat is entirely dependent upon the moral health and happiness of a limited aristocratic governing cast, it necessarily follows that the proletariat is at present far from being happy, since it finds itself led by riffraff arrivists, high priests of vulgarity, machine-power larrikins, smug, sentimental, pharisaic bourgeois, overfed idealists and scientific fanatics.

Blustering proselytizing glorification of mediocrity is always significant of decadence, and consequently it is not surprising to find, in this age of "who's who?"—when every Tom in business, and every Dick in politics, and every Harry in sport, art and philanthropy, has his busy-buzzy Boswell—that the life of Lewis Carroll, our modern La Fontaine, and one of the most distinguished, whimsical and poetical philosophers of all time and of all languages, has been omitted from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; ¹ wherein his contemporaries, Messrs. Hill, Gould, "Boss" Croker, Carnegie, and Company, and innumerable other geniuses of shop,

¹ I have since discovered the life and light of the great poet Lewis Carroll (a pseudonym) hidden in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* under the bushel of a mathematician named Charles Lutwidge Dodgson.

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trade and opportunism, may be found basking under columns of immortal academic sunlight. No doubt the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, published in one of the most ancient seats of learning, considered that Carroll could immortalize himself, without their assistance. Think, O Charlie Chaplin, of the space that these immortalizers have probably already set aside for you, Mrs. Castle, Carpentier and the "The World's Sweetheart."

Little did it occur to Huysmans on presenting Monsieur des Esseintes, the most precious of æsthetes, to the Paris public that some day Dr. Marston T. Bogart, military beau and professor of organic chemistry at Columbia University, would be delivering lectures on "perfumed preludes and scented symphonies, composed from a 'scale' of odours"; and gallantly tossing to the lovely "New-Yorkaises" "perfumed musical bouquets based on 'sol,' sol, pergolair; sol, pois de senteur; re, violet; fa, tuberoze; sol, orange flowers; si, surone."

No one but a scientist would have taken Monsieur des Esseintes with such olfactory earnestness!

But apropos of laboratorial bouquets of scientific music, I know of another scientist who, by the injection of various fluids, finally succeeded in making a hen crow, which achievement was proclaimed by the Press as one of the greatest triumphs of the century, although I, for one, think it the kind of "dirty trick" which any mischievous child would enjoy playing on a dutiful, unsuspecting rooster. It is even possible that the transformation of the sexes may take place in America without the aid of science, judging from the elongation and flattening of the female form and the shortening of

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the male leg and the abnormal development of his posterior.

The following Bill which has been presented in the Senate in the state of Georgia is also symptomatic of sex transformation. "It is a Bill designed to prevent any man from slipping away from home without informing his wife whither he is going and obtaining her consent." And in Chicago a poor devil of a husband has been recently forbidden by the court from "visiting, seeing, talking to or riding with any woman except his wife." From early childhood I have foreseen it—the American inverted harem. We may soon expect to see our Gibson men veiled and cloistered like the Turkish ladies. I only hope, when my final bed-time comes, that I shall not be seized by a band of ruthless fanatical brigands, who, by means of a monkey gland, or the fluid of a bottle-nosed chimera's dorsal fin, or some other vicious scientific artifice concocted to turn me into a perfect young lady, will prevent me from accomplishing my sacred right of creeping back like a weary little child, after a hard day's play, into the womb of Mother Earth—the transvaluing mother of all values.

But we must not wander too far afield, especially in these days when literature, like food, has been compressed by science into magazine digests of tabloids, capsules and extracts. It is nevertheless a curious fact that science, while giving us every conceivable kind of time-saving device, is robbing us of all our time for the real worth-while enjoyments of life, which, as the Divine Autocrat has decreed, are not only purely unscientific, but also entirely undemocratic. This would

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account, I imagine, for the fatuous, self-satisfied, aggressive and almost alarmingly vulgar expression of our democratized artists, philosophers and scientists,¹ who, having lost their imagination, and consequently their capacity for true enjoyment, take infinite pains to complicate the simplest and most obvious facts of nature with highfalutin phrases and mathematical symbols. And this abracadabra they then serve up to their brother bourgeois, whose egotism is always tickled by gibberosity, grandsillyquence and scientific mystification, believing this jargon to be expressive of "progress"—a word with which his tongue is thickly coated, and of which he considers himself a divinely appointed guardian.

What bourgeois would not choose to have himself transported by aeroplane, or wafted by a varnished three-legged department-store Ouija board into a heavenly kingdom of what he calls spiritualistic science, rather than be borne like a little child, on wings of faith, imagination and mystical adoration of nature, into the realms of God, where science, sex-equality and democracy enter not—thank God!

We have always suspected that the good, industrious, utilitarian burgher prefers with heart, sight and nose the glint of varnish and odour of petrol to sun-lit fields and aroma of flowers.

I am even expecting soon to see gasoline cans labelled

¹ "The greatest discoverer," wrote Kant, "in the sphere of science differs only in degree from the ordinary man; the genius, on the other hand, differs specifically." This would explain why the good bourgeois instinctively loves the scientist and mistrusts and even hates the genius, unless he is able to exploit him either socially or monetarily.

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"Forbidden Fruit," "Love's Awakening," "Circe," "Scientific Kisses," "Strange Flower," etc., and to be driven by cultured chauffeurs with monogrammed handkerchiefs of the sheerest linen, reeking with the perfume of their favourite petroleum.

It is a lucky thing that the Kaiser did not realize to what extent socially apprehensive America had become obsessed and dazed with the complexities and obfuscating subtleties of social etiquette, otherwise he might have checked the victorious charge of the American troops at Château Thierry—who were fighting to make the world safe for democracy—by hurling at them through magnaphones such perplexing and embarrassing questions as: "Is it correct to eat asparagus with your fingers?" "Should the napkin be entirely unfolded or should the centre crease be allowed to remain?" "Who enters the tramcar first, the gentleman or the lady?" "How may an elegant confident poise be developed in cultured society?" "Should a *femme du monde* peel a banana in public?"

How thrilled must be the urbanites and commuters to hear that they will soon be able to "listen in" by means of a handy aluminium stentorphone with germ-proof receiver and mouthpiece, and hear the very latest news and gossip about those who have "passed over." Ever since Sir Oliver Lodge was asked by his departed son Raymond for a Ford car and a large cigar, the progressive bourgeois has been pursuing occult scientists with entreaties to provide him with a device through which he might receive similar ethereal messages; for only a celestial scientist like Sir Oliver

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could be expected to communicate with spirits without the help of a patented machine.

In spite of Einstein to right of us, Einstein to left of us, Einstein in front of us, I, nevertheless, have succeeded for the past months in keeping him out of my subconscious mind, for once bill-boarded, cinematographed, phonographed, magazined and newspapered into it, I know from experience how extremely difficult it might be to get him out. A short time ago I was seriously disquieted by Jean Cocteau, Lady Astor, Dempsey, Mrs. Asquith, John Wanamaker the poet of dry goods, Mademoiselle Lenglen, Clare Sheridan and Otto Kahn, who had so successfully advertised their way into my poor brain that I almost despaired of being able to dislodge them. For over two weeks they haunted my dreams, and not only monopolized all conversation, but drove away my household gods. Of Bernard Shaw, and Heinz, the genius of "fifty-seven varieties," I have never been able to rid myself, and as for Mrs. Stetson, and Mr. Carter of liver-pill fame, they have for years been dashing through my nightmares, mounted on "Bull Durham" and brandishing bottles of "Campbell's Tomato Soup," which, as the world knows, is considered most delectable by Sir Thomas Lipton, Mrs. Pankhurst, the Countess of Warwick, Lord Northcliffe's famous chauffeur, and a legion of other celebrities.

Like the scholastics of the Middle Ages, who meditated over how many angels could be stood on the point of a needle, I now find myself speculating as to how many proletarians and Palace-Hotel democrats have been stood upside down on the point of Einstein's

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theory. It is only recently I discovered that Einstein is a scientist advertising "Relativity" which everyone seems to comprehend except myself. Even my old cook told me the other day that relativity was the basis of modern art, and that I was unquestionably taller in the salon than I was in her kitchen. This must be true, as it sounds so scientific. "Einstein's theory"! Here he is again, covering an entire page in the daily Press, and below the flaming letters of his name you are asked: "Can you talk about Einstein's theory intelligently?" You are then informed that "*The Encyclopædia Americana* will put the knowledge of the world at your elbow." What an appalling idea! especially for the few of us left who, realizing that we know absolutely nothing, take our divine ignorance with holy seriousness.

Behold another full-page advertisement of "Einstein for Children." We will probably soon have patented Einstein nipples, so that infants will be able to subjectively suck in his theory with scientifically prepared milk. As the last war was fought to make the world safe for Democracy, the world in the next war will probably be made safe for Relativity, free-verse and *istism* art. The amazingly gifted E. E. Cummings—one of a countless drove of modern poetical geniuses—who has lately honoured *Broom* with his exquisite esoteric "Three United States Sonnets," would, without doubt, consider such a war unnecessary, for you will see in the following, one of the supreme three, that he fancies the world, or the U.S.A. at all events, already entirely safe for him.

By jingo! it looks as if *Broom* has stolen a march

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over *The Nation*, *The Masses*, *The New Republic*, *The New Marx Snobian*, *The Ladies' Home Bolshevik*, and last, but very far from being least, *The Police Gazette*, which has a frank naturalness and genuine simplicity rarely to be found in the just-mentioned smart weeklies. I trust that it is still going on, although I have not seen it since the days when my old Irish nurse was a fervent subscriber to it.

But hark to E. E. Cummings, the bard of Manhattan, and judge for yourself. Personally I find that he has ascended to greater heights in Super-Pullman-Palace¹ democracy than Sandburg, Cendrars, Wyndam Lewis, de Bosschere, Joyce, or even the famous Bellock Stardale, who is now considered in Europe, by Rotundians and Ritzonians, to be far greater than either Shakespeare or Goethe.

¹ The Pullman-Palace Car, which permits the good democrat to travel not only "first-class" but "super-first-class" with a clear conscience, is one of the most ingenuous practices of democratic hypocrisy.

A Labour leader and assiduous reader of *The New Republic*, *The Masses* and *The Nation*, once told me, while lounging in the upholstered armchair of a "Pullman-Palace Car," that he "would rather die than live in a rotten, degenerate country where 'first-class' was tolerated."

Hitched on to the end of our train at the time was one of democracy's innumerable private cars, in which were a "Hot-Stuff" lover of the plain people with his wife, who was a "Regular Guy" and "Jazz Queen," their "Some Kid" of a Socialist daughter, clad in "knickers," communistic maids and valets, and an aristocratic dog.

I am all for "first-class" and private cars, but not for having "Hot-Stuffs," "Regular Guys" and Communists in them!

As I am not a democrat, I do not object to being with the public in public, but I do object to being with the public in private.

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I might note in passing that, save in dress, Rotundians, Greenwich Villagers and Ritzonians are curiously alike in manners, habits, thoughts and ambitions. But—Hark!!

III

by god i want above fourteenth
fifth's deep purring biceps, the mystic screech
of Broadway, the trivial stink of rich
frail firm asinine life

(i pant
for what's below. the singer. Wall. i want
the perpendicular lips the insane teeth
the vertical grin

give me the Square in spring.
the little barbarous Greenwich perfumed fake
And most, the futile fooling labyrinth
where noisy colours stroll . . . and the Baboon
sniggering insipidities while. i sit, sipping
singular anisettes as. One opaque
big girl jiggles thickly hips to the canoun
but Hassan chuckles seeing the Greeks breathe)

No one but an ultra-select Palace-Hotel democrat, "jazz-lizard," sex-equalitarian, mob-idolater and progressive machine idealist could possibly have had such an inspiration.

"This sort of thing knocks literature into a cocked hat," writes John Dos Passos in his panegyric on the Olympian genius of E. E. Cummings.

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In a future number of *The Dial* we will surely see E. E. crowning John!

The following lines are more Parnassian laurel leaves gathered by John for the immortal wreath of E. E.:—"It is writing created in the ear and lips and jotted down. For accuracy in noting the halting cadences of talk and making music of it, I don't know anything that comes up to these two passages." Anyone with a sensitive ear will immediately detect in "these two passages" the lyrical acroamatical harmonies of E. E.

"Buffalo Bill's

defunct

who used to

ride a watersmooth-silver

stallion

and break onetwothreefourfive pigeonsjustlikethat

Jesus

he was a handsome man

and what i want to know is

how do you like your blueeyed boy

Mister Death."

One wonders how they do it! I see that Sandburg has gone and done it again all over pages and pages of that most fastidious, mundane and highly respectable *New Republic*, with, as he puts it, "the independence of a hog on ice." The ever-increasing bebies of genius-ettes, composed of Gertrude Steins¹ and Marianne Moores, have no compunction whatsoever about doing

¹ Mrs. Stein, who has recently been overdone by Jo Davidson, underdone by Jacques Lipschitz, and done to death by Pablo Picasso has almost been outdone by Sherwood Anderson in the following *Little Review* of her super-genius: "She gives words an oddly new, intimate flavour, and at the same time makes

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it in public too. I know not what effect their divine afflatus will eventually have upon them, but I am beginning to suspect what it was the Boojum read to the poor Snark-hunting Baker that caused him to "softly and suddenly vanish away."

But why meander on?—for has not the unbelief, hysterical self-exploitation, neurotic self-consciousness, pretentiousness, vulgarity, brutality, inane vanity, lack of respect, loss of dignity and tradition, and falsification of all human values of our epoch, been expressed unwittingly but in the most inimitable fashion by our Barnumized Mr. Shaw in his bill-boarded appreciation of Shakespeare, which, by the way, I find amazingly illustrative of La Fontaine's fable of *The Rat and the Elephant*? This fable I always thought rather extravagant, until I came across the following lines by England's self-exploiting self-exporter, but now I feel that La Fontaine might have even substituted gnat for rat. "With the single exception of Homer," declares Fabian George, "there is no eminent writer, not even Sir Walter Scott, whom I can despise so utterly

familiar words seem almost like strangers. . . . For me the work of Gertrude Stein consists in a rebuilding, an entire new recasting of life, in the city of words." Oh! Sherwood, Sherwood! How could you?

The following is an extract from "A Portrait of Jo Davidson," executed by Mrs. Stein in her "city of words": "To be back, to attack back. Attack back. To be back to be back to attack back. . . . You know and I know, I know and you know, you know and I know, we know and they know, they know and we know, they know and I know, they know and they know you know and you know I know and I know," I certainly do know Gertrude, and I furthermore know that you know, but it's hard on the poor gullible chap who doesn't know. Sherwood, Jacques, Jo, and Pablo all know, too, I'm sure.

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as I despise Shakespeare—when I measure my mind against his. The intensity of my impatience with him occasionally reaches such a pitch that it would positively be a relief to me to dig him up and throw stones at him.”

Of course La Fontaine's rat was no fool, for by associating his name with the elephant he has managed to keep himself in the public eye for two centuries.

The public eye, to be sure, particularly at present, is not the most desirable place to find oneself in, for every possible species of rodentia has, of recent years, succeeded in gnawing its way into it. Who knows! perhaps it may be my destiny to be pushed some day into this public eye of fame by friend and foe and left there to suffocate in the limelight, among a howling mob of celebrities.

A short time ago a musical “genius” was pointed out to me who had just popped into fame for having declared that Wagner was merely *opéra bouffe*. And I know of another celebrity who, from fear of sinking into oblivion, suddenly began to squirt “arty” deprecation over Leonardo da Vinci.

I am fully aware, however, of having done a considerable amount of squirting myself, but only on those who would prefer to be squirted on, rather than be left unnoticed.

But while we are on the subject of rats, gnats and elephants, listen to America's “New Order of Critical Values” by ten of her most “celebrated authorities,” who, “with a view of covering the whole field of life and thought,” have compiled in the April *Patrician* the following chart according to their “scheme of

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things." The names are marked on a scale ranging between plus 25 and minus 25. The ten highest are: Shakespeare and Bach, each 22; Goethe, Anatole France, Beethoven and Nietzsche, 19; Wagner, 18; Leonardo da Vinci and Charlie Chaplin, 17; Flaubert, Aristotle, Plato, George Washington, Voltaire, 16; Walt Whitman, 15. These patrician authorities, therefore, allot ninth place among the greatest geniuses in the world's history to Charlie Chaplin. Our village socialist and uplifter, who has introduced the cinema and dancing "salon" to our peaceful fishing folk, would probably give Charlie, who is, according to Mr. Waldo Frank, not only "our most authentic dramatic figure," but "our sweetest playboy," first place, particularly after having seen him last night, in a film, put his muddy boots on a lady's lap and then get idiotically and combatively drunk for the educational amusement and edification of our village children. In the middle of the performance a peasant arose with great dignity and left the hall, with his wife and grandchildren, for, being illiterate and of the old school, he was unable to admire in Charlie Chaplin what Jean Cocteau would call the realism of Shakespeare and Molière.

In the same article Cocteau, with true Dadaist courage, asks: "Shall I dare" (and of course he does; they all do) "to add that it is the realism of the great, of the tender Charlie Chaplin?" "I hope," continues poetasting Jean, "that this phrase may reach him and bring him the homage of our whole generation." Shall I now dare to add still more realism to the tender realism of our Yankee-doodlized, twinkling French bardlet?

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“Twinkle, twinkle, little bat,
I know full well what you’re at!
Up above the world you fly,
Like a tea-tray in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle”—

But to continue with our modern Patrician authorities:

Among the two hundred and two names chosen from Plato to the present day are Babe Ruth, Mary Pickford, Carpentier, Irving Berlin, Fanny Brice, Herbert Croly, Mademoiselle Lenglen, Francis Hackett, Elsie Ferguson, Billy Sunday, Douglas Fairbanks, Lillian Gish, Clare Sheridan, Dempsey, Elinor Glyn, Al Jolson, H. L. Mencken, and others of like genius.

Probably Dr. G. V. Lapogue, a world-famous scientist, had the above American Olympians in mind when he opened his address before the Eugenics Congress in New York with the following prophetic exhortation:—
“America, I declare solemnly that it depends on you to save civilization and produce a race of demi-gods.”
Let us hope, on the contrary, that civilization, or what there is left of it, will dissuade America from undertaking any such enterprise. I only fear that Dr. Lapogue and his scientific associates of the Eugenics Congress, who expect, no doubt, to produce by scientific methods this race of demi-gods in factories and laboratories, have become far too solemn to be saved, or otherwise I would suggest having them all stretched out, on a star-lit night, with their faces upturned to the heavens, in order to cure them for ever of taking themselves too solemnly.

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In fact, as the vast majority of human ills arise from taking ourselves too solemnly, I can think of no better cure for scientific megalomaniacs, and for the ever-increasing number of fatuous burghers and fatted proletarians who are secretly pining and plotting to become supermen, than a few minutes of star-gazing every night before bed-time. It is, of course, natural that such a simple, inexpensive cure would not meet with the approval of bone-setters, and those who are deriving flourishing incomes from nostrums and thermal resorts. Affluent neurologists and psychiatrists would obviously consider such an idea puerile and entirely absurd. I continue, nevertheless, to take this cure every star-lit night, in spite of the fact that the stars have the most drastic effect on Dr. William Carlos Williams, who, we are told by Alfred Kreymborg, is one of the greatest of modern poets, and "deserves a garland, with which he would hang you." It is hardly necessary to add that the Doctor dedicated the following scientific effusion to Alfred, his faithful Boswell:—

THE COLD NIGHT

It is cold. The white moon
is up among her scattered stars—
like the bare thighs of
the Police Sergeant's wife—among
her five children. . . .

If I could only be present at a meeting, *intra parietes*, between Dr. G. V. Lapogue, Dr. William Carlos Williams, Dr. Oliver Lodge and Dr. Marston T. Bogart! Ah! but that is too much to expect!

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Had Dr. William Carlos Williams whispered in a fit of fine scientific frenzy, on a hot night, in the ear of the Police Sergeant's wife that her bare thighs reminded him of the white moon among her scattered stars, it would have been his private business, but when the Doctor goes on to tell us, on a cold night, in cold print and in cold calculation, that he has received a

“new answer out of the depths of
my male belly: In April . . .
In April I shall see again—In April!
the round and perfect thighs
of the Police Sergeant's wife
perfect still after many babies.
Oya!”

—it then becomes not only our business, but even, methinks, the business of the police. If we expect the police to protect our wives against thugs and Bolsheviks, it behoves us, I consider, to protect their wives against lusty imagists like Dr. Williams.

But to give you some idea of the place occupied by the Doctor in American letters, I shall quote the following appreciations of another one of his esoteric volumes entitled *Kora in Hell*:—“Surely a unique book! These phrases stand on their feet or sit on their bottoms well outside the family circle,” says *The Dial*. And again: “The most original book of the year,” writes *The Boston Transcript*. I sincerely trust that the devil, the Doctor and the *Transcript* will manage to keep “Kora in Hell,” and that *The Dial* will continue to see that all those phrases remain seated on their bottoms well outside *my* family circle. But we must

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not overlook William Marion Reedy, the Bellman of the Crew of imagists, who continues to tingle his bell in praise of the Doctor: "A hard, straight, bitter javelin . . . but there is a tang of very old sherry in him, to mellow the irony. As you read him you begin to realize how little poetry—or prose—depends on definitions, or precedents, or forms." Bravo William Marion Reedy!

"So the Bellman would cry: and the crew would reply
"They are merely conventional signs!" "

I don't know about the old sherry, but there is certainly more than a tang of something very, very old indeed in the Doctor and his admirers. The Doctor would have us fully appreciate this fact, as he devotes an entire page of eight by five inches to a poem entitled "Spring," comprising in all the two following lines:—

"O my grey hairs!
You are truly white as plum blossoms."

On page 51 in the same volume we find another poem called "Lines," of which there are exactly eight words on an otherwise empty page:

"Leaves are greygreen,
the glass broken, bright green."

You see we are not so far away, after all, from

"Other maps are such shapes, with their islands and
capes,

But we've got our brave Captain to thank'

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(So the crew would protest) 'that's he's brought us the best,
A perfect and absolute blank.' "

It is not that I object to an empty page, nor an empty brain, but I do object to an empty heart. In fact, one of the greatest tragedies to me in life is that when the heart is surcharged with pure emotion both page and brain are apt to remain a blank.

I do not believe this, however, to be the case of the Doctor, who is very careful to tell us that he conceals his heart in his "male belly."¹ I do believe it, though, in the case of the poor, ignorant, inarticulate chap who, after gazing in silence for over an hour at the full moon, while tenderly holding the hand of his beloved "Maggy," suddenly blurted out: "It looks like hell, don't it?"

He, at least, "struck one clear chord to reach the ears of God," a chord which is never struck by those with empty hearts, even if their brains, pages and pockets are full.

This has, indeed, been a long deviation, and much too long had it merely been a question of dragging in a pair of doctors; but as Dr. William Carlos Williams and Dr. G. V. Lapogue are, like E. E. Cummings, Anatoly Maryngoff, Carl Sandburg and the others, such characteristic cases of "Walt Whitmania," I do not feel that I have allotted them too much space.

This whitmania has now spread to the farthest cor-

¹ In columns of attack against the author, the English *Outlook* refers to our Doctor as "that very individual living poet." It would seem that the *Outlook* has concealed not only its heart but its intelligence as well in the same hiding place as the Doctor. Heavens, what an outlook!

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ners of the earth, and is not only making ravages in cities, suburbs and small towns, but even the rural class has become infected with it.

My farmer's wife asked me recently if I would not pass judgment on a book of verse written by her son. "He feels that he owes it to the public to have it published," she said. As her son, a young man about twenty-five, in my employ, has already passed judgment on me for over a year by receiving exorbitant wages for doing practically nothing but write his book, I did not feel it incumbent upon me to sponsor its publication, although I find it quite on a par with those of our most advertised modern bards or "word fellows," as Mr. Sherwood Anderson affectionately calls them with Ohioan debonarity. But I shall let you judge for yourself:

Carrots

cæsar crossed the alpes on the top of a buss
with his hand on his belly
remember xenophon and think of his belly
and the glorious belly of h. g. wells
and lenin's belly and trotsky's belly
think of the bellies of salambo and sapho
I shall think of my own belly
your belly his belly her belly
I have been wounded with pointed kisses
they are too long and pink
I dare not eat them
o.g.

(NOTE.—You will observe that the only capitals in the poem are the three capital P's.)

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As our village, like yours, is naturally not without its uplifter and detective of genius, it will surely not be long before our farmer's lad will be enrolled as an immortal; and then *The Dial* will be given another opportunity to tell its readers with what majesty "these phrases sit on their bottoms." *The Little Review* will undoubtedly discover them to be "The most important book which has come from the imagists"; and *Poetry* will again find its precious self strolling, as it did while reviewing one of Dr. Williams' works, in "a small garden induced to grow in unlikely surroundings: on the whole so deep-rooted that its bloom should last a long time, so native that very likely meaner poets will come to pick what they can." God forbid! for, with my family of farmer poets, I get practically nothing off my farm as it is.

And now, most patient reader, I most humbly beg your forgiveness for having led you through highways and byways from "America's new order of critical values" to my little farm in La Napoule. Let us return to those "critical values."

Those who tied are: Martin Luther and Floyd Dell; Flo Ziegfeld and Frederick the Great; Lord Tennyson and Marilyn Miller. Other ratings are: Yvette Guilbert, 11; Dante, 10; Mary Garden, 8; Joan of Arc, 3; Marie Jeritza, 7; George Eliot, 2; Dempsey, 6; Marshal Foch, 1; H. L. Mencken, 8; Wordsworth, 1; Ring Lardner, 7; Tennyson, 2; Ed. Wynn, 6; Rostand, 1.

It is to be noted that the smart Mr. H. L. Mencken, co-editor of *The Smart Set*, votes five for himself, and gives zero to the following names:—Leonardo, Abélard, Marcus Aurelius, St. Francis, Racine, Shelley, Sopho-

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cles, Foch, Raphael, Praxiteles. For Ludendorf he votes 23.¹

As the ten august compilers of the above chart are the most conspicuous critics and editors of our most conspicuous newspapers and magazines, it allows one to realize to what altitudes the mass is being elevated!

I shall now tack on my little evaluation of their transvaluations, which I find are pathetically silly, perversely cynical, hysterically pretentious, priggishly grotesque, morbidly self-conscious, effutely insincere, clownishly self-exploiting, decadently flippant, neurotically vulgar, pathologically egotistical, invertedly snobbish, foppishly amoral, maliciously ungenerous, phantastically cheap, anæmically insolent, mongrelly envious, and—commercially shrewd.

It will probably be my lot to be accused of endeavouring to associate my name with "immortals," but I feel that I have at least shown unusual modesty and discrimination in my selections. At all events I have

¹ This is not surprising, as he tells us, in a painfully undigested article which has recently been reviewed in *The Literary Digest*, that the strutting popinjay Frenchman is completely devoid of gallantry, and is a wholly incompetent soldier, panicky in defeat and hysterical in victory. And yet—you may not believe it—I feel certain that some day we will hear of our immortal H. L. strutting about in Paris and sporting the "red thread of honour" in his buttonhole, for having done the popular Washington-Lafayette "sleight of tongue" trick.

Herr Mencken, however, becomes a trifle super-smart when in the same gastroxynsian article he assures us that "it is hard to find a civilized American who is not full of secret regret that the Kaiser did not conquer the country—and secret hopes that the Japs will do it before he has to go to Hell!" It looks to me as if our "high priest of Uncle Sam's young intellectuals" has already gone there. *Requiescat in pace!*

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displayed more self-control than the sentimental Mr. Shaw, who, with a modern dirt-cheap spade of factory-made wit, would like to dig up Shakespeare and throw stones at him. This is, however, the kind of violence to be expected from a passivist, socialist and rampant sentimentalist. How differently, and with what amazing skill and grandiose tolerance, did Shakespeare dig up Shaws and Jack Cades, to dangle them with Elizabethan mirth and philosophical irony before the footlights of humanity.

In the happiest and most normal epochs the roots and leaves of humanity toiled with contentment, and found fulfilment in seeing their efforts crowned by mystical flowers of art, abstract science, religion, aristocracy and chivalry; but for the last century the lower middle class and proletariat, poisoned and auto-intoxicated by false and undigested education, forced on them by self-exploiting culture-boosters, vainglorious egocentric philanthropists, and professionally buoyant, soul-sucking uplifters, have been oozing their way, with socialistic egotism, malice and envy, out of leaf and root into the bloom, until they are now producing odourless, colourless, artificial flowers, standardized by commercial science, and laid out by sex-equality in interminable, monotonous, dismal rows.

The canker of decadence is already at the heart of this sorry, uniform, Taylorized flower of our commercially scientific, levelling, power-machine civilization; just as it attacked in previous times the heart of the mystical rose when it had lost its force and power to exhale the aroma of beauty, culture, romance and imagination demanded of it by root and leaf.

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But the Great Gardener of infinite variety and infinite inequality, who takes no note of man's notion of good and evil, of justice and injustice, will come again with another springtime, to drive forth, as He did from Paradise, the enemy of life force—the only enemy He recognizes—the Scientific Satan of equality and identicalism.

And the old plants withered by bluff, pretentiousness, and comfort science, Christian Science, social and sex-equality science, and science of tears, laughter, art and commerce; and rotten to the root with vulgarity and democratic factory soot of fraud, imitation, similarity and seriality, will be uprooted, and in their place will spring up anew the fragrant, mystical, unscientific flower of the past in "Gardens bright with sinuous rills, where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree." And where the factory was, another Kubla Khan will another "stately pleasure dome decree." And the democratic honk of the wild goose Ford, who declares that "history is all bunk," will be hushed for centuries; and the voice of that sweet singer Israfel will again be heard in the land.

Before my glass house (which, alas! is not even of plate-glass) is stoned by other dwellers under glass, I would like to suggest a "perfectly beautiful" unscientific plan; for it is tragically humorous to think that all the schemes which have thus far been devised for the salvaging of humanity have been conceived of by scientists who have consecrated their lives to the annihilation of it. This would not include, of course, those scientific gentlemen on the outside of the bull-ring, who

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are always on hand to stuff up the poor old gored horse with medicated straw in order to send him back again into the arena of life.

My plan is as follows. I propose that we immediately begin to unmechanize, uninvent our way out of these scientific catacombs of unbelief, artificial pleasure, false happiness, machine idolatry and suffocating vulgarity into the sunlight of belief, full-hearted Elizabethan merriment, self-expression, vital refinement and true happiness which existed before the fatal moment when Watt, the super-democratic scientist, conceived of the diabolical thought of an automatic power-machine.

We will start, therefore, by first suppressing radio, which has already had a most pernicious, degenerating, gossipy, scandal-mongering effect. (I ask you to observe carefully the expressions of all those intimately connected with it.) The sinister submarine and unholy aeroplane will follow, with tittle-tattling telephone, demoralizing, sub-educating cinema, falsifying, cheapening phonograph, and all the other equalizing, vulgarizing, brutalizing contraptions.

We will thus continue for, say a period of twenty-five years, until every form of power-machinery and everything connected with it, and **dependent upon it**, is banished for all time from the world.

In other words, I propose by a process of elimination to cure humanity in twenty-five years of the toxin inoculated into it one hundred and fifty years ago by Watt with his satanic invention, which has not only enslaved the human race, but corrupted and poisoned it to its very roots with the black pest of factory,

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vulgarity¹ and Democracy, the three most infectious and deadly sins which have ever been conceived of by the scientific Prince of Darkness and equality against the God of Light, inequality and infinite variety.

I would not have you think, patient reader, that this "perfectly beautiful" suggestion is made in a proselytizing spirit. Messianic exaltation was one of the many luxuries which disappeared with the last blush of my extreme youth.

There is all the difference in the world between the reformer and him who would save his own skin. Stargazing, to be sure, has led me to recognize that mine has merely an infinitesimal value, but the Almighty has, nevertheless, in His love of infinite variety, given me, and all the other microcosms, possibilities of protecting our little selves by instilling into us the instinct of self-preservation. My above plan arises entirely from this instinct.

It is not a question, therefore, of proselytizing oratory behind a desk on which is a glass of water for the parched lips of the would-be inspired uplifter, but rather the situation of one who finds himself confined in a malodorous room, with windows closed and blinds drawn. It becomes instinctive, for those who are forced to gasp for breath in such an atmosphere, to try, at least, to lift the blinds, open the windows, and let in air and sunshine, not for the purpose of converting or

¹ We have included vulgarity with factory and Democracy, as vulgarity is essentially in all of its manifestations a levelling force, and consequently a sin against life. But unfortunately he who is not a votary of it is to-day considered a pariah and ostracized from every society.

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uplifting others, but purely and simply out of a sense of self-preservation.

The shoal man, on the contrary, gasps for breath when he finds himself in sunlight and fresh air, for, unlike the flying-fish or the ceratodus—a rare genus of fish having lungs—he has been limited to gills which allow him to breathe freely only while swimming under the scum of bluff, bunkum and hypocrisy.

If, however, he is not occasionally given light and air, he soon begins to secrete deadly poisons, which develop into contagious diseases, and finally break out into pests.

The recent war gave some idea to what extent man has become degenerated by science and machinery. Europe sank to a greater depth of inhumanity and viciousness than ever before, simply because she had become more highly mechanized. Had the war continued, however, Europe would have been surpassed in scientific horror by America, which is the most mechanized, unspiritual country in the world, and consequently the most dangerous to true civilization.¹

I feel sure that unless we soon succeed in suppressing the blackest of all pests, the power-machine, and cleansing the atmosphere of its poisonous gases of democracy, it will not be long before humanity will be ground into inhumanity, and instead of having one rampagious old lady waving the red rag of Bolshevism and screaming out, "This is red and so am I!" as

¹ "Steel and iron are of infinitely greater account in this commonwealth than flesh and blood."—DICKENS. In all *commonwealths*, I think. The American Radiator Co., who advertises that "the Ideal Type A Boiler is more than human," would most assuredly agree with Mr. Dickens.

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Isadora Duncan recently did before a Boston audience, all of our old ladies will be doing it.

Even if this fate does not overtake my generation, the thought of my children or their children being overtaken by it comes as a ghastly nightmare.

Beelzebub, enthroned on his steam-roller of machine science and communism, is at our garden gate, with his ever-increasing hordes of disciples and dupes: necromancing mattoids, "arty" jukes, scientific hooligans, literary morons, mechanized submen, egocentric reformers, serialized snorting democrats, gold brick swamis, willy-nilly silly Fabians and Shavians, I.W.W. defectives, militant vulgarians, news-delirians, press-phobians, gutter and parlour socialists, apostate muddledmental Engelists, Tolstoyists, Russellists and Kropotkinists; beetle-browed mephitic syndicalists, Semitic Marxists, megalomaniacal internationalists, half-fool collectivists, paranoiac Bolsheviks, manic-depressive Babouvists, Proudhonists, Bakuninists; processional caterpillar Saint-Simonists and Owenists, prohibitionists, mongrel environmentalists, baboon evolutionists, fetishized mechanomentalists, snide Cubists, sterile feeble-minded expressionists, buffoon Dadaists, monkey-hearted futurists, morosophists, commercial suggestionists, mass-educationalists, professional altruists, proletculturists, caponized lady-kin feminists, female cocka-lorumists, octopus monopolists, hoopoe psycho-analysts, fanatical idealists, fee-foxing psychiatrists, venal spiritualists, belching optimists and self-boosting philanthropists.

The hour is at hand. . . . Let us rise out of this miasma of machinery and democracy and drive him

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and his followers back into the black factory hell of equality and identicalism with a cross made in a joyful, aristocratic, free artisan age of the past, when art was an expression of faith. *Nunc aut nunquam!*¹

Although Doctor Emile Coué advertises in *The New Republic* and elsewhere that he has healed Lord Curzon and cured Countess Beatty, and that all America is beginning to repeat, "Day by day and in every way I am getting better and better," I cannot help but feel that America, Europe, Lord Curzon, Lady Beatty, *The New Republic* and all of us are getting worse and worse.

It even occurs to me on re-reading the above list that the world, with the possible exception of Henry Arthur Jones, Léon Daudet, Urbian Gohier, Miss M. G. Kilbreth, Mussolini and a few others—including myself, of course—has already gone to the Devil. In these circumstances it is reassuring to know that civilization has always been wrecked or saved by a few.

I, however, unlike Mr. Bellamy and all the other Utopian-dopians, am not for suppressing the Devil altogether, even were it possible; for a world without him would be a very smug, dull, inhuman place indeed, but a Utopian² world without inequality and infinite variety would be inconceivably worse.

¹ Avanti Savoia! Avanti Mussolini! Avanti Fascisti! Come to our rescue! Bring us the light and might of your moral Risorgimento! Save us, St George! and thrust again your spear into the maw of the dragon, who to-day has reappeared from his slimy swamp, more horrible than ever, under the deadly scientific camouflage of the altruistic Judas-smiling Labour Leader. Ejja, ejja, ejja Alala!!

² "If it is Utopian schemes that are wanted, I say this: the only solution of the problem would be a despotism of the wise

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To be capable of love, one must be capable of hate. To be capable of good, one must be at least capable of sin. To be able to love God and all of His works, one must be able to hate the Devil and most of his works. But to be able to hate the Devil, we must have him with us, if for no other reason than to keep us in good moral fighting trim, and prevent us from becoming utopianized, puritanical scribes and pharisees, with ready stones in our hands for Mary Magdalens and Prodigal Sons.

What is so revolting about the unleashed passions of to-day is, that they arise, not from sincere hatred, but from the vicious suggestion of political serpents, sentimentalists and cold-blooded mercenary scriveners, who are as incapable of true emotion as are our Mumbo-jumbo scientists, artists and their auto-intoxicated following.

But we must not be too severe, for, in the circumstances, it is a great wonder that humanity is not far worse than it is, considering that we are all suffering from the accumulated toxins of one hundred and fifty years of applied science and machinery.

As I am considered by my progressive friends to be a reactionary mischief-maker, I can think of no more

and the noble, of the true aristocracy and the genuine nobility, brought about by the method of generation—that is, by the marriage of the noblest men with the cleverest and most intellectual women.”—SCHOPENHAUER.

This would be indeed the only solution, but fortunately intellectual women have a peculiar weakness for wastrels and Lotharios, and an instinctive antagonism for noble-minded men, while the noblest men have rarely been attracted by intellectual women. I said *fortunately*, for I do not think that a human utopia was ever a part of the Divine programme.

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appropriate way to cap the climax of this introductory ramble—or gambol on the green, as modern democratic burghers on the asphalt will probably dub it—and not disappoint them in their appreciation of me, than with the prayer of Jean Jacques Rousseau, the greatest of all mischief-makers.

I have already referred to him as having headed the Encyclopædists, which is not altogether exact, as he, Voltaire and others were but contributors to the monumental work of Diderot and D'Alembert; but it was Rousseau who laid the corner-stone of the French Revolution. No man, however, would have been more disgusted and horrified by the results of his own teachings than Rousseau himself, for he was at least a human, warm-blooded *maestro* of mischief, unlike the cold-blooded, inhuman, mechanized *illiterati* of to-day.

Of this much I am certain, that had Jean Jacques been living now, he would have been far more anti-republican than he ever was anti-monarchist, and in his famous denunciation of science would have included unholy democracy, which is the inevitable result of the automatic power-machine.

“Almighty God, deliver us from the sciences and the pernicious arts of our fathers! Grant us ignorance, innocence and poverty once more as the only things which can bring happiness and which are of value in Thine eyes.”

LA NAPOULE, 1922.

ALPES-MARITIMES.

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Characters

In order of their Appearance

JOHN BROWN . . .	{ Later known as Mervyn, the world-famous painter.
MRS. BROWN . . .	His mother.
ISAAC KOUGELMAN . . .	{ American Jew, of Kougelman & Company, world-famous art dealers of New York, Paris and London. Knight of the Legion of Honour.
JOSEPH ROSENGARTEN . . .	{ American Jew, known as "J. R."; partner of Kougelman & Company. Knight of the Legion of Honour.
ELLEN FLANNIGAN . . .	Old family servant to Mrs. Brown.
THE HOLY VIRGIN . . .	{ A fifteenth-century Renaissance statue in wood, attributed by Van Rensselaer-Levineson to Della Quercia.
MOSES STEIN . . .	{ American Jew; art booster for Kougelman & Company.
SAMUEL VAN RENSS- SELAER-LEVINESON . . .	{ World-famous art critic and conspicuous Ritzonian; born in the slums of New York, of Jewish parents. Commander of the Legion of Honour.
NORMAN DE PUYSTER VAN LOON . . .	{ Scion of old Knickerbocker family; celebrated art connoisseur and distinguished Ritzonian; living in Paris. Knight of the Legion of Honour.

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THE DUCHESS OF MANDELIEU . . .	{	World-famous society leader, international patron of arts and sciences, celebrated <i>littérateur</i> , noted sociologist, renowned beauty, conspicuous socialist, public benefactor, world-famous organizer of art exhibitions and charity bazaars. Born in New York pawn-shop, of Jewish parents. Officer of the Legion of Honour.
EZRA P. PACKER . . .	{	American multi-millionaire, world-famous financier, philanthropist and art collector. Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, etc., etc.
MRS. EZRA P. PACKER	{	His wife; also world-famous and "of assured social position." Knight of the Legion of Honour.
MISS PATRICIA PACKER	{	Their daughter; world-famous Press and Magazine belle, celebrated sculptress, President of "The Friends of Art," Vice-President of "The Friends of Music," etc. Socialist, and popular leader of the young smart intellectual set. Knight of the Legion of Honour.
OSCAR CADMAN . . .	{	Private secretary to Ezra P. Packer; with expectations of some day becoming world-famous.
FIRST NEWSPAPER RE- PORTER	{	Specialist in social celebrities, business, political and scientific geniuses and world-famous crooks.

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SECOND NEWSPAPER REPORTER . . .	{ Specialist in social celebrities, art, literary and musical geniuses and world-famous murderers.
THIRD NEWSPAPER RE- PORTER . . .	{ Specialist in social celebrities, stage and cinema royalty, sport geniuses and world-famous divorce scandals.
A DEBUTANTE . . .	{ "Celebrated for her histrionic talents in brilliant theatrical functions." Treasurer of "The Society for Birth Control," Honorary member of "The Friends of Vasectomy."
A GENTLEMAN Unmarried and uncelebrated.
RAILROAD PRESIDENT	{ Celebrated as husband of the divinely beautiful and erudite society leader, who is President of "The Friends of Eugenics," Vice-President of "The Woman's Socialist League," Founder of <i>The New Marx Snobian</i> .
SPORTSMAN . . .	{ Celebrated as husband of "Patrick Odd." Well-known clubman and inventor of the "Prohibition Cocktail."
SUPREME COURT JUDGE	{ Celebrated as husband of "Miss Nora Ibsen." Renowned for his game of golf.
SENATOR . . .	{ Celebrated as the democratic father of the democratic Duchess of Westchester.

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PATRICK ODD . . .	{ Celebrated society leader of the young married set, universally known as "Patrick Odd." Dadaist poetess, Cubist painter, Futurist musician, fervent Bolshevik, exotic jazzier, charity worker. Vice-President of "The Friends of Einstein."
A LADY	{ Daughter of a world-famous yachtsman. Socialist and celebrated "Society matron around whom revolves an unceasing world of gaiety." President of "I Feed a Baby Society," Secretary of "The Friends of Freud."
MISS NORA IBSEN . . .	{ "Popular member of the most exclusive set," militant leader of the Suffragettes, President of "The Friends of Pugilism," world-famous golf and tennis champion, universally known under her maiden name of "Miss Nora Ibsen."
HIS HONOUR PATRICK MULLIGAN SWEENEY	{ Mayor of New York City. World-famous political genius, ardent feminist.
HEAD DOCTOR	{ Of a private Sanatorium near New York.
INTERNE	{ Assistant doctor in same Sanatorium.

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HENRY MULLER . { Lunatic in same Sanatorium, who
thinks himself the world-famous
"Loyal Painless Thompson."

REV. SIMPKIN-SANDS . { Also a lunatic in same Sanatorium,
who thinks himself the world-
famous Mr. Wanamaker.

DON QUICHOTE . { Another lunatic in same Sana-
torium, who thinks himself
himself.

MACGHEE . . . { Arrant snob. Celebrated chauff-
eur to the Duchess of Mande-
lieu. Vice-President of "The
Friends of Motor Culture."

Orchestra, Porters, Lackeys.

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John Brown—Later known as Mervyn

Tall, slender, and about thirty years of age, with spare, short, straw-coloured beard growing into two points. His hair is long and straight, after the traditional fashion of young artists. His large, blue, introspective eyes, veiled with subjective dream, seem to be looking in rather than out, and mirror a pure, limpid, guileless nature. He has the slow, vague, undecided movements of a somnambulist, and his rare gestures are of one who is living in a trance, or under a mystical spell. His lofty, luminous forehead entirely overbalances a narrow chin and a small, sensitive, tremulous mouth. With long slender hands and feet, tapering fingers, small mouth and ears, diminutive teeth, scanty beard and elongated oval face, he has all the characteristics of a declining aristocracy of the past, for the effete, newspapered, so-called aristocracy of to-day is so intermarried with millionaire butcher, grocer, pork-packer and Jew that it has become degenerate not from over-refinement, but rather from over-crassness, and more often than not out-porks pork-packer in hog-wallowing vulgarity. There are, fortunately, a few left whose aristocratic strongholds have not yet been stormed by fanatical or sentimental scientists, baseball swats, social Press agents, jazzing democrats and cinaphonafans.

Occasionally, when speaking of his pictures, Mervyn displays the impulsive enthusiasm of a little child, which is only momentary, however, as he soon relapses into his former apathy, and withdraws again behind the veil which separates him from the objective world.

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As twilight shimmers and plays through a grove of spring leaves, so do expressions of sweet melancholy, gentle bewilderment and mild apprehension hover and flit over his hyper-sensitized, ascetic face, which never blooms into merriment, although it is occasionally brightened by a faint, delicate smile of affectionate sympathy.

At times his pale face appears to be illuminated by an almost supernatural light, the effect of which is intensified by his shock of yellow hair, forming, as it were, an aureole about his head.

The Flemish and Italian primitives would have found in Mervyn an inspiring model for their heads of the Christ. In those happy, aristocratic, unmechanical days before the printing press had begun to press belief, hope, art and spirituality out of humanity, and when the Church was the high altar of faith and ignorance, the temple of love, dream and legend, and the womb and cradle of the artist, Mervyn would have had an outlet, through creative expression, for all the beauty of his sensitive, delicate imagination and rare refinement which have been submerged below the surface of his consciousness in the twilight of his subconsciousness by the hideous materialism, bluff, vulgarity, brutality and overwhelming charlatanism of our epoch.

Although Mervyn has grown up in a peaceful little village in France, he has nevertheless been overshadowed from childhood by the ugly, sordid spirit of our times, symbolized in the slick, arrivist, serialized leer of "Loyal Painless Thompson," whose portrait, painted on an enormous blue and yellow bill-board, advertising laxatives, and erected in the field opposite

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his mother's house, has been grinning at him ever since he can remember from over the wall into his garden, and through his bedroom window.

Had Heine lived until the end of the nineteenth century, he would probably not have declared that "There is nothing new under the sun, and even the sun is a warmed-up joke," for he would have seen Art for the first time in the history of humanity invaded by impostors, necromancers and "Loyal Painless Thompsons" who, realizing the unlimited possibilities of suggestion through the ever-increasing facilities of propaganda and advertisement, not only started in to exploit the public with art-shams as they have with nostrums, but have even succeeded in having themselves accepted by their bleating bemused flocks as geniuses of Art. This preposterous hoax has finally been carried so far by these expert commercial psychologists, suggestionists and mercantile mesmerists, that the mutton-headed public is now as ready to swallow any critic-coated idiocy for art as they are sugar-coated bread pellets for liver-pills, or coloured sea-water for hair lotion.

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Mervyn is Art, weakened, corrupted, diseased, degenerated and driven mad by democracy, science and power-machinery, which have turned the studio into publicity bureau, photographic parlour, news agency and laboratory of charlatanism, and filled it with avaricious, psychological empirics; brokers of genius; scientific mountebanks; perverse self-exploiting art-leeching critics; press-phobians; news-delirians; mechano-monomaniacs; victimized neurasthenics; art pro-

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moters; spell-binders; culture-vultures; flabbergasted "arty" blatherskites; wiggle-wagging, hocus-pocusing third-sex suffrag-"ists" and "ettes"; humdrum old spinsters craving "arty" sex-thrills, and fed on pish-posh and flap-doodle by bamboozling, art-foozling hucksters; nocturnal echidnas, giglots, Mænads, flappers and monkey-doodling flubdubs, drunk with balderdash of "ists" and "isms"; high-brows, whipper-snappers, popinjays, lackadaisical louts, and new-fangled ninnies, calling themselves *maestri*; temperamental, harum-scarum squirts, and nincompoops posing as supermen; æsthetic jack-nasties, jackanapes, thingum-a-gigs, and scallawags; artistic jub-jubs, boos, snarks, jaberwoks, boojums, and punchinellos, followed by their press agents; puddle-ducks, rag-tags, bobtails, and geese with brains and livers congested from tommy-rotten mass education crammed down their throats by higgledy-piggledy idealists, egocentric uplifters, culture-cads, fanatical mob-muddlers, and silly, shilly-shally, lollipop, molly-coddle sentimentalists; and last, but not least, gilded, la-di-da, highfalutin lady and gentleman cuckoos, who lavishly pay to have their sterile eggs hatched into museum-dodos by sycophant, jackal artists.

Mrs. Brown

She is nearing sixty, simply but tastefully dressed in grey silk, with a *point de Venise* collar fastened at the throat by a large cameo brooch. Her wavy grey hair is parted in the middle and drawn down over her ears, from which are suspended long, old-fashioned earrings. The wrinkles of her sensitive pale face har-

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monize with the delicate beauty and loveliness of her expression, radiating benevolence, tolerance and refinement; which qualities, with gentleness of manner, are rapidly disappearing from the modern woman who, with votes sticking out of her overcoat pockets, sex relegated to laboratory, and birth to hospital ward of labelled shelf and ticketed infant, looks as if she had been gazing at spark-plugs, valves, clutches, stop-cocks, magnetos, gears, pistons and cranks, etc., rather than at the flowers of the field.

An American by birth, and descendant of one of Virginia's oldest and most aristocratic families, which had been ruined and practically exterminated by the Civil War, she was taken to England, while still an infant, by her widowed mother—her father, a gallant Confederate officer, having given his life in defence of one of the most refined, happy, dignified and aristocratic civilizations of the last century.¹ Her mother, broken in heart and spirit, died shortly afterwards, leaving her daughter to the care of some distant English relatives, who adopted the orphan out of pity for the mother and sympathy for the Southern cause, with which the virile aristocratic England of those days

¹ "It is not yet certain that the world will be better for the triumph of the North over the Southern traditions of America. It is not yet certain that this victory was a good thing."—G. K. CHESTERTON.

I, for one, am certain that it was a very bad thing, as it meant the triumph of mongrel democracy and dehumanizing industrialism, over an agricultural, aristocratic, highly humanized civilization. Carlyle was also certain, and moreover epitomized his certainty in the following immortal lines:

"The South said to the black, You are slaves, God bless you!
The North said to the black, You are free, God damn you!"

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naturally sided; not having been contaminated, as she is at present, with the degenerating virus of vulgarity, and the unscrupulous, democratic hoax of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity."

(NOTE.—As God in His wisdom has created upper and under dog, why viciously taunt the under one, between nips and bites, by fraternally telling him that he is free, equal, and even your superior?)

At an early age she married John Brown, a promising young English artist, and went with him to live in France, where their only son, John, who, later on, became world-famous as a painter under the pseudonym of "Mervyn," was born.

As Mrs. Brown has always found happiness and fulfilment in affection, devotion, loyalty and love, her life can be of little interest to the steel-bound, pipe-encircled, bill-boarded world of to-day, which has no time to concern itself with those who are without ambition to see themselves reflected in its mirror of vanity, or more particularly with those who have no desire to exploit themselves through its newspaper, magazine and psychological laboratory of self-advertisement.

For instance, it never occurred to Mrs. Brown, when her husband died, to have herself cinematographed and photographed, after the touching manner of our modern weeping widows, in a dramatic position on his tomb, with hope of seeing her overwhelming grief filmed and illustrated in the daily Press. Nor, strangely enough, did the thought of having herself interviewed and "written up" as an unselfish, self-sacrificing, saintly mother ever cross her mind.

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She is of the chosen few who instinctively know and feel that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and consequently the word gratitude never dangles from her gift.

She is simple, credulous and unsuspecting, like all uncomplex, sunlit, pellucid characters who, not having dark corners in their own souls, do not look for shadows in others. For never has a more biologically profound statement been uttered than "It takes a fox to catch a fox." (I, being more than less of a fox myself, know whereof I speak!)¹

Like so many old-fashioned women, she merely continued to do "her bit" in war time, as she had always done in peace time—unnoticed, unthanked, unrewarded.

She is the type of woman worthy to have mothered those generous, blithe-spirited, immortal singers of *The Skylark* and *Ode to the Nightingale*, who, according to our modern blankety-blank versers of skyscrapers, boilers, plumbing and machines, are no longer worth mentioning.

Isaac Kougelman

A dapper protuberant little man, around fifty-five. He is clean-shaven save for a very small tooth-brush moustache. His slightly bald round head pivots on an invisible neck. He exudes prosperity, health and self-satisfaction. His large black eyes, in pockets of puffy flesh, gleam with commercial activity and success.

Between his thick sensual lips his tongue frequently

¹ "We confess our little faults only to persuade others that we have no great ones."—LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

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appears, and with dilating nostrils he seems to be continually enjoying his senses of taste and smell.

He wears the regulation officer's uniform of the Y.M.C.A. in the last war. It is aggressively new, and his shoulders are padded after the American fashion. His tight Sam Brown belt accentuates his large hips, and makes him appear to be wearing a bustle. With his glittering buttons, shining leathers, creased trousers, glinting spurs, and pomaded head, he gives the general impression of having just popped out of sacerdotal sartorial sanctuaries and *bon-ton distingué* tonorial salons.

His voice is unctuous and persuasive, except in moments of emotional stress, when it rises to a shrill key of anxiety and timorousness. On his small plump cupid-like hands sparkle rings, set with large cabochon emeralds and sapphires. Occasionally the trace of a very slight foreign accent may be detected in his speech. He is obviously an American Jew of the Ashkenazim.

Joseph Rosengarten

A tall, svelte, strikingly aristocratic American man of about forty-four years of age, with massive brow and black deep-set meditative eyes. His nose, expressive of rare distinction, is long, slender and aquiline. He is clean-shaven, and his straight, jet-black hair, combed back without a parting, intensifies the mat-white colour of his face.

He is also dressed, like Kougelman, as an officer of the Y.M.C.A.; but his clothes, although smartly cut, look neither old nor new, and he wears them with the

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accustomed ease of an English officer. His leathers have the patina of dark mahogany.

As a pure offspring of the Sephardic Jews, who, from the eighth century to the discovery of America, inspired, directed and dominated the statecraft, literature, arts, sciences, and general culture of Spain, he has preserved through the intensive atavism of a persecuted race the physical characteristics of his noble masterful forbears.

He has a mellow, modulated voice and speaks without either an English or an American accent. He never laughs, but occasionally his face lights with a smile of philosophical irony tinged with sadness. His movements have the grace, power and litheness of a tiger. His gestures are controlled and co-ordinate harmoniously with his thoughts. The intellectual dome of his forehead is counter-balanced by a firm lean jaw and a resolute but sensitive sensuous mouth, unlike the compressed predatory mouth, fleshy jowl, and pugnacious chin, so characteristic of his compatriots, who are rushing up with what they call "pep and punch of he-men," a clap-trap civilization. For the time being, this mechanical civilization is dominating the world, but it is doomed ere long to crumble, as it is founded on false values, unhealthy, misdirected egoism, and sham sentimental idealism, which inevitably bring about class-hatred, sex-antagonism and unbelief.

Ellen Flannigan

Ellen is a daughter of the Emerald Isle, of myth, folk-lore and love-lore; and although she is over sixty,

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with snow-white hair, her small, closely set, kindly, light china-blue eyes still twinkle with the humour-mystic light of "Old Erin."

She has the form of a pillow tied in the middle, snubby, optimistic, potato-nose, large, elastic, generous mouth, and long monkey-like upper lip, which she uses like a drop-curtain to conceal a gaping space in her upper gum.

From her religious, superstitious depths bubbles of humour, quizzicality, devotion and wonder rise to the surface of her sympathetic, kindly face, to burst into rippling circles of Gothic expressions.

Banshees, spooks, gnomes and pixies play a very lively part in her honest old head, and the pleasurable fears and delightful tremors of mystery she experiences from her fundamental belief in these "little folk" afford her far more happiness and gladness of spirit than her Americanized sister Bridget derives from all the mechanical, vulgarizing, brutalizing amusements and standardized distractions of New York. For, shortly after her arrival in the "Land of the Free," Bridget not only lost the liberty of her imagination, but also all respect for her beautiful, poetical, Celtic traditions, which she was told by her husband, an Irish policeman who had previously had his faith boiled out of him in the American melting-pot, were all "bunk." It was not long before the old faith, reverence, and true self-respect were boiled out of her too; but she soon found substitutes in *The Police Gazette*, Tammany Hall, the Great White Way, sky-scrapers, Coney Island, and democracy in general.

Old Ellen suggests a character in a lovely moonlit

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fairy tale, wherein she might be the faithful old nurse to a shepherd lad who turns out to be of Royal birth and marries the King's fair daughter. And, after all, is this not infinitely more delightful and inspiring than the climax of our modern fairy tale, where lynx-eyed newsboy and slick guttersnipe, through sharp practice, flattery and hypocrisy, turn into pompous, fatuous kings of tacks, sardine-tins, and patent bottle-stoppers, or into unscrupulous, self-righteous, mealy-mouthed, flaccid-jowled Senators, who take their autocratic selves far more seriously than they do their beloved Republic?

This faithful, full-hearted old Irishwoman, who finds dignity, honour, happiness and self-expression in the service of gentle, cultured people, belongs to a type which, like many others expressive of higher aristocratic civilization, is rapidly being crushed out of existence by the steam-roller of Democracy. This hideous levelling machine has already flattened jewelled-crowned Emperor into pot-hatted President; statesman into politician; artist into commercial illustrator, quack psychologist and mountebank suggestionist; churchman into showman; *grande dame* into *demi-castor*; virgin into demi-virgin; scientist into commercialized comfort-cracked inventor; *grand seigneur* into "good-mixer"; gentleman into middleman; courtier into hotel manager; guest into P.G.; poet into journalist and self-exploiting mercantile prig; family doctor into fee-leeching specialist; peasant into factory theow; artisan and craftsman into serf of machine shop; man and woman into sex-equality; lover into psycho-analyst; sweetheart into suffragette; Louise, Trilby, Mimi, into

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Taylorized Casino "Cornuchettes"; and—Ellens into Bridgets.

The Holy Virgin

An Early Renaissance statue, slightly over half life-size, carved out of wood. Most of the gilding has disappeared, leaving the plaster underlay visible. Traces of polychromy remain.

On the head is a high ornate golden crown, a portion of which has been broken off. The right hand and arm are missing. A greater part of the base and bits of the drapery have been knocked away, leaving surfaces spongy with worm-holes.

Her exquisitely small head, poised on a long liliaceous neck, suggests, in the words of the poet, a bell-flower swaying on a slender stem.

Although shattered and disfigured, this graceful, gracious figure of the Holy Virgin still retains the mystical, celestial loveliness and spiritual beauty conceived of by an aristocratic age, founded on faith, reverence, noble aspirations, and a self-respecting sense of vital vigorous class distinctions: qualities which have since been sucked out of humanity by the double-headed warty octopus of democracy and power-machinery.

Her tender, sensitive, compassionate smile and the wistful naïve purity and ethereal sweetness of her expression would hardly meet with the approbation of our bobtail, cocktail, bob-haired flappers; sporting, sweated, gum-chewing, clubby, swaggering, swearing "he-women"; silly, supercilious super-sales-ladies; political viragoes; office-seeking vixens; brazen bediz-

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ened biddies and mechanized factory jades, decked out in the very latest Paris models serialized in East-side sweat-shops; husband beaters; sex-equality shrews; scientific termagants; lady-chairmen, lady-charwomen, lady-bird professors, lady-bug parlour socialists; communist vampires; war-decorated succubi; polyandrists; militant suffragette furies; Gibson, Fisher, Christy & Co.'s vamping little daughters of democracy; globe-trotting cosmopolitanized beldams; professional society plutocratic press-belles.

I also fear that were our Virgin to materialize, she would be found lacking in "snap" and "go" by our tired business men who, tricked out with every conceivable kind of clasp, snap and button, and with "Ideal" fountain pens and "Eversharps" hooked to their pocket with "Winterbottom's True-lover-clips," "bid you Good-morning from behind a Robert Burns cigar" when—they are not too tired. I can hear Rooseveltians too denouncing her as a mollycoddle without "pep."

The "regular guys," of whom we are told by the *Literary Digest* Lady Astor is one, would unquestionably find her "perfectly punk." Our clean-cut haberdashed Adonises, wearing the "World's Smartest Collar suggestive of Dressy Dignity"; "Topkis Union Suits, giving comfort at every point from neck to knee"; "Nettleton Shoes, the criterion by which style is set"; "Ventilated, Love-meshed Straw Hats with Apollo Rims"; and "Soul-stirring Ties of Passionate Pattern"; would find her simply "bum" in comparison to their jazzing athletic "cuties" with "a skin you love to touch," and dressed in "alluringly distinctive fault-

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less sport togs," "celestially chic Onyx Pointex Hosiery," and "ethereal luxite lingerie for Debs and Sub-Debs."

Ritzonians would think her dowdy, provincial, uncultured and prudish; Greenwich Villagers and Rotundians would brush her aside, as they do all beautiful things, with a self-satisfied gesture of utter scorn. To scientists she would appear ignorant, uneducated, superstitious and childish; and Communists, Marxists, Bolsheviks and intellectual Labourites would hate and despise her for being compassionate and human.

Our poets, philosophers and writers, who strut down corridors of newspaper fame scattering in their literary paths of glory "Goddams," "bloodies" and "to hells," etc., which they imagine are symbols of superman virility, would surely consider The Madonna stuck up, unresponsive, cold, affected, idiotically aloof, and, in fact, an appalling bore. Apropos of Goddams, I have just been confronted by at least half a thousand of them "in the most monumental work that has ever flowed from the pen of an American author."

To be sure, nowadays, every book that flows from the pen of an American author is not only monumental, but immortally so. America, however, will never become overcrowded with immortal monuments, for as soon as Americans begin to suspect that they are really in front of something permanent and unchangeable, they not only become restive and nervous, but unhappy, miserable, and even terrified.

And alas! I even feel sure that our new-fangled men of God who advertise and popularize religion by turning their churches into cinema halls and variety

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shows are, in their heart of hearts, secretly ashamed of what they necessarily must consider a reactionary spirit in Mary, Mother of Jesus. And woe to him, in these progressive times, who is suspected of that cardinal sin—reactionaryism.

This statue of the Holy Virgin was fashioned in Florence in the middle of the fifteenth century, in a small humble workshop, where a young artisan, Giuseppe Delfiore, worked, in the midst of his devoted family, on Sundays, holidays, and odd moments when he was not employed in the studio of Ghiberti, one of the great Florentine sculptors to whom he was apprenticed, and where he met the nobility of Tuscany, who were always most friendly with the artisans, and generously encouraged them in every possible way.

Giuseppe, like all his friends engaged in the various handicrafts of the epoch, worked with the joy and zest of self-expression and belief, from which are derived the highest and noblest forms of human happiness.

Although Giuseppe was merely an average artisan of his period, and could neither read nor write, and had never ventured farther than a few miles from Florence, he nevertheless had received a far more comprehensive education and a more basic and traditional instruction in his art and all handicrafts connected with it than is given to the newspapered, magazine-reading, commercialized, travelled, gimcrack art worker of to-day.

In dignity, as in courtesy and refinement there are few, even among our most favoured classes, who would not suffer in comparison to him, and he was far superior, both morally and spiritually, to our average college

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graduate, whose B.A. applies more to Bachelor of Athletics than Bachelor of Arts.

If civilization means machinery and the highest possible perfection of material comforts, we have then arrived at heights never before dreamed of by humanity. If, on the contrary, civilization is dependent on internal qualities, which I believe it to be, we have sunk to a depth of vulgarity, viciousness, brutality, dishonesty, amorality, trickery, and utter disregard of consideration for others, never before reached except by the most savage and cruel tribes, and by civilizations in the last stages of decadence.

“You are the mystical, instinctive, unfathomable love I feel for my well-beloved mother, of whose flesh I am; and the mystical instinctive unfathomable love I feel for my beloved wife, out of whose flesh my children have come. You are mother, wife, and daughter in one, and I shall come to You with love of father and son, for You are the Holy Mother of fathers and sons.

“When I was a little child You smiled down upon me from your glittering altar in the great dark cathedral, and I felt comforted and reassured. You were my mother, and my mother was You. And from every cross-road and from every nook your welcoming arms were stretched out to me. And now as a man I come to You for comfort and reassurance, for You alone can give me hope and tenderness and encouragement. And You alone still smile upon me as You did from your glittering altar in the great dark cathedral, and fill my heart with belief and gladness; for I am still as a little child in the presence of your serene

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purity, your heavenly beauty and divine compassion.

"May God give me strength and power to express through my Art the mystical instinctive and unfathomable adoration I feel for You through my beloved parents, my beloved wife, and my beloved children."

These and many similar thoughts flitted through the mind of Giuseppe Delfiore while he was carving virgins out of wood to be placed in shrines and chapels on highways and byways, where nowadays grin the hideous faces of "Loyal Painless Thompsons," advertising their nostrums.

And now, after four hundred years, this most beautiful and inspiring of all symbols, from which humanity has derived infinitely more hope and solace than it ever will from science, comes to us through the hands of the Jews, broken and shattered, to be finally landed in an insane asylum, after having been betrayed by Philistine and Pharisee, stood on its head by vulgarity, commerce and science, and, with tricked, dissimulated restoration, fraudulently sold as an Old Master to Ezra P. Packer, the American king of chewing-gum.

Moses Stein

In the fifties, tall, lank, clean-shaven, with thick grey hair and a long or, as a "*New Republic* sort of person" would call it, dolicocephalic skull. He has the skin, colouring and harmless expression of a bibliophile. This scholarly impression he heightens by wearing the horn-rimmed spectacles of a Chinese sage.

The glances of erudition and profound wisdom which

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he casts over his spectacles thrill and kill the super-cultured-crazed American wife, and terrify the sub-cultured-business-crazed American husband.

His habitat for the last years has been a large plush sofa in the middle of the Kougelman Galleries, where he may be found meditatively roosting, like a great owl, with his forefinger thrust between the leaves of some classical book on Art.

He has as instinctive a *flair* for promising clients as has an owl for gorged mice scuttling back to their holes after a riotous night in well-stocked larders.

"Friends of Art" and Art collectors find themselves in conversation with him without being aware of how they drifted into it.

Even the most uncultured of our "cultured ladies" are delighted to find, after a chat with him, what a sensitive appreciation they have for Art. Later this discovery is well rubbed into their poor ignorant husbands who, out of self-defence, are finally forced to invest in one or more canvases or art objects from Kougelman & Co.

Moses Stein is as skilful in his "cultural masquerade" as is our modern arrivist, or political rogue, in his democratic one; and like Kougelman, who is "gotten up to beat the band," Moses is gotten up to beat the "arty bourgeois."

Van Rensselaer-Levineson

Of average height, slight, and about fifty-two years of age, with small closely cut beard. In every way he tries to accentuate his slight resemblance to the King

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of England, on whom he has evidently patterned himself.

He speaks with an affected English drawl, and wears a monocle, which he is either constantly adjusting in his eye or dangling between thumb and forefinger.

He is an American Jew, born in the slums of New York, of Russian parents.

With splendid pluck, steel-like determination, and rare ability, he finally succeeded, by toiling all day and following courses in night-schools, in entering Harvard University, entirely unaided, where he worked his way through by coaching rich, dissipated classmates.

Having started as a child by cadging plaster statuettes on Broadway, he gradually conceived the idea of a career through Art, foreseeing that America was about to free herself from the bullying, brutal heel of the Irish immigrant conquest,¹ and emerge from the epoch of spittoons, backyards festooned with family washing, brown stone fronts, and bearded Mephistophelian goats, surveying, with cold, pallid, satanic eyes from mounds in vacant lots, refuse, junk and tin cans.

He further realized the great financial and social possibilities of Art expert and critic, when crude, eager

¹ As it was an Irish nurse who first spanked my little bottom and unfailingly paraded me through the streets on St. Patrick's Day with a green ribbon on my bonnet; as I received my first thrashing from an Irish "mick" four years my senior; as it was an Irish "cop" who arrested me for trespassing on his "keep-off-the-grass" plot; as I was first led to the altar of Venus by a fair colleen; and as I discovered on attaining my majority that my home city of New York was morally, mentally, and physically under the control of Irish politicians, I have, quite naturally, referred to this epoch of our history as the Irish conquest.

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and socially apprehensive America would begin, with millions, billions, trillions bulging from her pockets, to buy up with democratic American dollars the art treasures of Europe, and corner crowns and coronets for her golden daughters.

Shortly after graduation, as a first step in his life's campaign, he succeeded in arousing, through subtle, Semitic flattery, the interest and affection of a rich, sentimental Boston lady with literary pretensions, for whom he wrote a book on Art, which she published under her name.

He became her lover, and when he had gathered sufficient funds from her through pen and passion, went to Oxford for a post-graduate course in Arts and Letters, where he acquired several degrees, an English drawl, and at the same time arbitrarily hyphenated "Van Rensselaer" to his Jewish patronym, realizing how appetizing a common tasteless chub may become to a democratic American palate if served up with a highly seasoned *hollandaise* sauce on a gilded platter belonging to an old patroon family of New York.

On leaving Oxford he obtained a position as Art critic on an English newspaper in Paris, where his skilful use of novel art jargon in literature and conversation soon made him conspicuous and welcome in the American Art colony. He eventually discovered amazing merit in the insipid work of a wealthy American sculptress who, with the skilled assistance of a number of highly paid Italian modellers, had planned, with the usual U.S.A. "pep" and "punch," to outdo Michelangelo. The reward he received from her for

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his rare discernment in recognizing her genius enabled him to go to Rome.

Although a renaissance of appreciation for the *Quattro* and *Cinque cento* primitives had been blooming for some time in European Art circles, he saw the possibility of popularizing the movement and carrying it into America. He therefore began to specialize in this epoch, and bought up for a trifling sum all the available pictures he could lay his hands on of an obscure Primitive, about whose life and works he wrote a book. Having thus brought these pictures into prominence, he disposed of them at enormous profit to a "primitive" American millionaire.

With this book and the sale of these pictures he slid on fame and fortune into the dinner-parties, opera-boxes and boudoirs of the most exclusive *femmes du monde*.

To-day he is universally recognized as the greatest Art critic since Ruskin, and his word is law in the Art world. He is High Priest of erudition and culture in Ritzonian society, and even causes more flit and flutter among culture-stricken ladies than does a Grand Duke or an American multi-millionaire, or the great Bergson himself, before whom some of our over-cosmopolitanized ladies have been known to swoon from gongoristic chic.

Norman de Puyster Van Loon

A gay, sprightly, slim, spick-and-span little man in the fifties, with bald head, large parrot nose, dyed yellow moustache, and light, watery, sentimental eyes brimming with goodwill and kindly feeling. He is

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always smartly dressed, and is never seen without a large purple boutonnière in day-time and a white one at night.

He reminds one of an exquisitely patterned grey moth with mauve spots, which flutters in at dusk and flutters out at dawn. For years he has fluttered from antiquary to tea-cup, from charity bazaar to dinner-party, from "first night" to cabaret.

He is an early Ritzonian, and for over thirty years has been haunting Paris, Venice, Deauville and Cannes. Almost any day during the late autumn and early spring he may be seen taking luncheon at the Ritz Hotel in Paris, where he is held in high esteem and even affectionate regard by the famous manager, Mr. Ellis, Viceroy and Father Confessor of Ritzonian Society, and Olivier, his celebrated *maître d'hôtel* and chamberlain.

As descendant of a distinguished old Knickerbocker family of New York, he is most ingenious in subtly acquainting strangers with his aristocratic birth and titled European connections. Since there now exists in America, behind the gigantic political bluff and social hypocrisy of democracy, more class distinction than in Europe, Americans unfortified by titles have been naturally forced to develop new forms of offensive and defensive snobbism, wherein characteristically they have become specialists and experts.

The pyrotechnically witty, progressive and profoundly erudite Marquise de Loather, a most exclusive Ritzonian, is his sister. His other sister, after having obtained newspaper fame as a leader of the Militant Suffragettes, divorced her husband to marry a cousin

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of the Sultan of Turkey. Her book, entitled *The Harem*, written after she became a Turkish Princess, is considered by Ritzonians to be a most brilliant encomium of Mohammedan faith and a skilful defence of seraglian customs and formalities.

Like his compatriots, he is entirely devoid of imagination and true art feeling; but he displays rare understanding in harmoniously assembling old furniture, bibelots, and works of Art. His apartment in Paris is a small museum of eclectic culture, and has given him the position in the American colony of savant and art-arbiter. For although America is as yet uncreative in Art, she has surpassed modern Europe in good taste, as applied to interior decoration, architecture and landscape-gardening.

On his library table among the latest European periodicals is always to be seen *The New Republic*, to which he would naturally subscribe, as he is, like Van Loons in general, "A *New Republic* sort of person."

During the Great War the strain and responsibility of giving daily tea-parties to wounded officers and titled nurses so racked his nerves that he would awake at night with a start, to find himself asking his distinguished but imaginary guests, grouped around his bed, "strong or weak?" and "how many lumps?" This phrase of tea-ritual in time became an obsession, and led to insomnia and nervous collapse. After having been unsuccessfully treated for incipient psychasthenia by a dozen or more renowned neurologists and psychiatrists of Paris, London and Switzerland, he was eventually cured, at great expense, through suggestion, by a clever Jewish charlatan, who had previously been an

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illiterate clown in an itinerant circus, but who, having met with conspicuous success as a healer, finally managed to become a protégé of the Duchess of Mandelieu.

This quack's spectacular cure of Van Loon and his book entitled *Super-scientific Psychocentric Occultism*, written for him by a starving medical student in exchange for food and a few francs, brought him such celebrity as a worker of miracles that, in order to avoid police explanations for practising without a medical permit, he decided to dedicate his life to God, and thenceforth scornfully refused all fees, but accepted *donations*, to enable him "to tabernacle in the flesh among my followers and carry on my Saviour's work."

Mr. Van Loon, on being awarded the Legion of Honour for self-sacrifice and devotion to the Allied Cause, became violently patriotic, and at the slightest provocation would oratorically take to Washington, Lafayette and Sister Republics, as a duck takes to water.

In spite of America's triumphant part in the war, he has nevertheless secretly remained, like all Americans living in Europe, socially ashamed of his crude compatriots, and would shrink from the thought of being classified as a member of the American colony of Paris, as he considers himself to be a cosmopolitan. In this view he has always received comfort and moral support from his sisters, the Marquise and the Princess, who, in spite of their advanced socialistic views, consider it part of their marital duties to scrupulously avoid all Americans, except those possessed of titles through marriage. In order further to distract European attention from the social handicap of having been

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born Americans, any reference to their native land was taboo until the outbreak of the Great War, notwithstanding the fact that the Van Loons, like some other aristocratic American families, could leave a vast number of European titles by the wayside in their genealogical march back to Adam and Eve. But the heraldic fowl of old Europe could nevertheless hardly be expected to allow an uncoroneted American hen to strut about in their emblazoned courtyard on equal social terms without having first laid her golden egg of Democracy in their matrimonial basket of impoverished aristocracy. It is true that during the Great War America rose a trifle in Europe's social eye, but she has since slid back to her previous plane of social inferiority. Americans are still given precedence, however, over the black and tan races.

Although since the war "Normie" Van Loon has been working up the "popular and hail-fellow-well-met" policy, I nevertheless wonder if, on returning the recent affectionate and intimate appeal for re-subscription sent out by *The New Republic*, he wrote "you bet" on the margin, as the distinguished editors of that distinguished weekly solicited their distinguished readers to do.

(NOTE.—Since snobbism is a composite instinct made up of self-preservation, sex, gregariousness and vanity, I would not have you think, gentle reader, that I am not, after my own fashion, quite as much of a snob as our friend Van Loon. Mr. Thackeray, who fathered the word, was unquestionably a vital vigorous one himself.

But, curiously enough, although I have heard many

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men admit and even boast of their viciousness, treachery, dishonesty and brutality, the only person I have ever met who frankly admitted being a snob was a mild-eyed old hermit who collected sea shells and wrote sonnets to Humpty-Dumpty.)

The Duchess of Mandelieu

In the early thirties, tall, extremely slender, with a magnetic and dominant personality vibrating with unlimited nervous energy. Her movements and gestures are sudden and unexpected, suggesting spontaneity, impulsiveness and sincerity; but an unusually keen observer could detect behind all this histrionic display a cool, calm, calculating brain. She has never felt love or affection, although she can simulate both with rare intensity. She is mental, unscrupulous and amoral, but she enjoys being generous and kind, when these qualities are consistent with her vanity and ambition. Should she, however, be crossed or thwarted, she would be capable of refined cruelty and ruthlessness, even to those dearest to her.

From her earliest childhood she recognized jungle law to be human law, and that the true biological strength of women lay in claw and fang of sex attraction, flattery and ridicule; and consequently has remained indifferent to unbiological feminist movements. Like all political brains, she skilfully deploys those trustworthy, never-failing old decoys of altruism and love of the plain people, ruses concocted by the first tribal politician to obtain self-advertisement and power.

Although of Jewish birth, she is of the most beautiful

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Italian type, with dark luxuriant hair, camellia-white skin, a delicate slightly arched nose and large mesmeric black eyes. Her lips are stained vivid crimson, and her eyes are darkened. Her face is extremely animated and seductive, and she has a bewitching mannerism of wrinkling her nose and half closing her eyes. Occasionally she affects a French accent, but her usual pronunciation is mildly English, having diligently and intelligently cured herself of the nasal stigma of a sexless, sapless, mechanized American twang.

Her rapid, ejaculatory sentences are accompanied by soft mocking laughter, gurgling up from her instinctive belief that the world is but a puppet show of sham and farce.

She is a Ritzonian and one of the leaders of that new cosmopolitan Society, inspired by America and founded by Mr. Ritz, which has supplanted, with restaurant, casino, hotel and dance-hall, the salon and court life of the past, and substituted hotel managers and *mâitres d'hôtel* for chamberlains and masters of ceremony.

Born in a New York East-side slum of an Armenian Jewish father and Italian mother, she grew up under the three golden balls of her parents' pawn-shop with fixed determination and haunting ambition to escape from the fust and gloom of junk and cast-off garments, and the sinlit glitter of stolen trinkets, peeping out from dusty shelves and shadowy corners with evil eyes of poisonous insects.

At the tender age of fifteen she managed to be rescued from the sordid meanness and squalid ugliness of her surroundings by a wealthy young reformer engaged

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in Utopian settlement work. She soon contrived to have herself seduced by her guileless sentimental young uplifter, and later extorted money from him, by blackmail, in collusion with Patrick Sweeny, a Tammany ward boss who manœuvred the affair. This was her first lesson in practical politics, in which she became an adept during the two years she remained with the boss as his mistress.

Her next victim was the sexagenarian multi-millionaire, Mr. Moses Blumenberg, newspaper and magazine proprietor, whom she snared with her wiles and radiant beauty, and then led to the altar, having been ably assisted by her Irish boss, who had placed her to this end with his respected and naïve maiden aunt, where he had passed her off to Blumenberg and the world as his lovely cousin.

Backed by her husband's newspaper and financial influence, she fulfilled the pre-nuptial promise given to her faithful "cousin," by having him made Police Commissioner of New York. In this post he acquitted himself with such righteous energy and puritanical fervour that he was next nominated by the "Clean Politics League" and elected Mayor on a reform ticket, which position he still occupied at the time of the Mervyn Art Exhibition.

As Mrs. Blumenberg, she was a paragon of wives—kind, considerate, capable, light-hearted and entertaining. Their house became a centre for journalists, politicians and artists; and she wove a spell of such youth and happiness about her old husband that it was not long before he was entirely controlled and dominated by her vivid personality. At his death, some

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years later, he left her sole heiress to his vast fortune.

Although she occupied a conspicuous and influential position, she nevertheless realized that, as the widow of Moses Blumenberg, she could not hope to penetrate into the most sacred circles of New York Society. Consequently, with a parterre opera-box, and Newport in view, she negotiated a second marriage with an impecunious but smart young clubman of powerful family connections.

She soon exhausted American court life and, seeing the possibilities of a more picturesque and international career abroad, discarded her second husband with a Paris divorce, in order to wed the bankrupt Duke of Mandelieu of Bourbon descent.

By this third alliance she secured one of the most distinguished social positions in Europe, and by means of her vast fortune, and psychological understanding of self-exploitation acquired as the former wife of a newspaper owner, became world-famous.

As she now felt herself entirely safe and unrestricted with her complacent Duke, she had, like most *femmes du monde* of past and present, innumerable lovers, not from any sexual temptation, but from an innate sense of vanity, ambition and instinctive desire to torment and dominate the male. Her latest *liaison* with Van Rensselaer-Levineson (which resulted in the birth of an heir to the ancient Dukedom of Mandelieu) is based, in spite of mild antagonism existing between them, on race sympathy, memories of the bitter struggle and suffering of their childhood, and the literary prestige he has given her, by having written a book and numerous brilliant political articles under her name.

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Notwithstanding her genuine fondness for Levineson, she has held securely on her hook for several years one of the most powerful Prime Ministers of the epoch, while at the same time carrying on clandestine relations and political intrigues with the foremost leader of the French Extremist Party. It has also been remoured that it was she who inspired a certain famous philosopher to write an essay on sex, contradicting his previous theories, which had caused an upheaval in the intellectual world. For less serious diversion she surrounds herself by a court of biddable snoblings and sentimental masochistic *chiceurs*, of whom Van Loon is one.

As arbiter and creator of fashion, the greatest Parisian dressmakers, jewellers, modists and shoemakers compete with each other to obtain the privilege of executing designs created for her by many of the most celebrated artists of the day. In fact, all vendors of art and luxury grovel at her feet.

She is the vital, feline, predatory type, belonging to the unscrupulous, conscienceless, arrivist, triumphant modern class of political, religious, scientific, artistic and financial master-charlatans who, ever since the advent of the power-machine and the consequent appearance of unbelief and democracy, have gradually obtained the direction of human affairs, through every conceivable form of humbug, political intrigue—based on false hypocritical altruism—and scientific commercial suggestion, until they are to-day in absolute control of the world's destiny.

Humanity, to be sure, has always been dominated by a small amoral, lawless, brigand group, but it was

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unquestionably happier under the artisan-made heel of an aristocratic brigand than it is to-day under the serialized boot of a democratic thug.

Ezra P. Packer

About six feet in height, with massive frame, grey hair, clean-shaven face, and penetrating suspicious eyes. He carries his sixty-five years with the health and vigour of a Captain of Industry who has accumulated bulk in body with prosperity and self-assurance.

The corners of his compressed slit-like mouth are lost in deep cheek furrows, encircling an ingratiating inlaid grin, which is worn in America as a facial advertisement of success, democratic good-fellowship, and altruistic endeavour. His aggressive combative chin, cloven in the centre, protrudes between flaccid jowls, draped over a heavy undershot jaw. He speaks with the immobile lips of a ventriloquist, in a nasal monotonous voice. His gestures are few, definite and authoritative.

He is the old-fashioned type of American magnate who is gradually being superseded by the scholastic ascetic priest of high finance, who is making of business an art, a religion.

A dentist's chair was the cradle of his fame and fortune, for while the dentist was at work on an abscess in his gum caused by an unclean toothpick, the idea suddenly flashed through his mind of the commercial possibility of hygienic toothpicks, sealed in sterilized paper wrappers. From that moment he became ob-

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sessed with the scheme, and thought and dreamed toothpick.

This inspiration was the result of his being, at that time, book-keeper for a small company manufacturing "Elite Hygienic Toilet Paper" at great profit.

He finally managed to interest his employer in his venture, and shortly afterwards the "P.P.C. Toothpick," in crisp gold-tipped envelopes, was introduced into leading hotels and restaurants, while among the galaxy of joyous magazine and newspaper advertisements of foods, laxatives, and motors, etc., appeared a diptych of heads: one with bandaged jaw and tragic mien, the other wreathed in smiles and gaily holding a toothpick. Under the former was written:

"An unclean toothpick, not a spree,
Has brought this swollen jaw to me."

While under the latter appeared:

"Now if you would from germs be free,
Be sure and use a 'P.P.C.'"

This stanza was his first contribution to American literature. In a comparatively short time he tooth-picked his way into a million dollars, which enabled him to ascend the chewing-gum throne and roll up one of the greatest fortunes in America. Having thus become a national figure, his views, not only on finance and politics, but also on Art, literature, sociology and philosophy, were eagerly sought for and published broadcast.

About this time he was nominated for the Hall of Fame by one of America's most popular magazines,

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along with the "Czar of Jazz," a celebrated prize-fighter, a world-renowned cabaret dancer, Richard Strauss, a famous free-versing society leader, the illustrious inventor of the "Nyké Letmedoit" carpet-sweeper, and Auguste Rodin.

The following logical, obvious reasons were given for Ezra P. Packer's nomination as an immortal:—"Because he is one of America's greatest poets of high finance; because his modesty is almost of a supernatural quality; because he carries his keen humour into his game of golf; because his taste, erudition, appreciation and intuition of all that is true, noble and best in art are infallible; but chiefly because he is philanthropist, altruist, royal-good-fellow and the proud father of the clever, lovely Miss Patricia, destined in the not far-distant future to be a leader of the Smart Set and one of Democracy's fairest and most radiant daughters."

As his fame increased, he felt it incumbent upon him, like so many of his great and august contemporaries, to record his triumphs in an autobiography which, according to present-day traditions, was written by his B.A. Secretary.

The eulogistic preface to it, contributed by the President of the United States, who largely owed his election to Packer's enormous party contributions, presented the author to the youth of America as one of the most noble and inspiring examples of American genius and enterprise. This preface was later read by the President himself at the unveiling of the Packer monument in Packerville, the chewing-gum citadel, before thousands of awe-struck spectators who, at the

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close of the ceremony, were finally brought to tears by the humility and modesty of Mr. Packer's little address, delivered by him from the base of his own statue.

He has received decorations from practically every country in the world, and was recently among the first dozen geniuses to be selected from the antiquated, overcrowded Hall of Fame, for a place in a brand new reinforced concrete Hall of Super-Fame.

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Ezra P. Packer, of unbelief in everything, and half belief in himself, is symbol of our epoch.

He is mediocrity crowned by mediocrity; nonentity crowning nonentity; quack crowning quack; fanatic crowning fanatic; ass crowning ass; dunghill crowning dunghill.

He is Japan in pot-hat; China without pigtail, and "Son of Heaven" set; mystical Russia with "Little Father" thrown to hyenas of communism; Turkey of unveiled women; Imperial Germany saddled by Ebert; England of Lloyd George, instead of St. George and King George, Emperor of India; Sweden of "By this it is decreed" substituted for "We, Gustave, by the grace of God, King of the Swedes, Goths, and Wends"; Italy reduced from Doge and Magnifico to democratized throne placating thug and cut-throat; Spain with serialized Carmen, gigolo Grandee, and Ritzonianized King.

He is France, of Fallières-Loubet, Galleries-Lafayette, Casino, "Monsieur-Dame," Boulevard Raspail; and sky-scraper America, brandishing and roosevelt-ing a big stick of machine-power progress and altruistic buffoonery in scientific circus of broncho-busting poli-

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tics, while bellowing for more babes and more votes from an over-populated world which has already voted itself into gutter and slave-driven factory.

He is interminable lines of barbered, tailored, immaculate, perfect gentlemen serving "soft wet goods" and dry goods with lofty condescension, opposite interminable lines of modish, manicured, "coiffured," paint and powdered perfect ladies of 'phone, typewriter and counter, wilting from ennui, and supercilious chic, in "decolty" b'ouse, Louis Quinze heels, spider-web near-silk stockings, and wearing the inevitable cheap imitation pearl necklace, "suggestive of that intangible something—the atmosphere of select, 'spiffy' smart society."

He is Bolshevik negro, with Ford car, wearing Chesterfield collar, Lord Dunraven derby, and distinguished Oxfords of royal red, indicting civilization in his third divorce suit trial.

He is cable, encircling the world to supply Press with gossip, lies, scandal and idiotic drivel about idiotic people.

He is a million slick, smart, newspaper reporters, interviewing and snap-shotting a million slick, smart mediocrities.

He is "Loyal-Painless-Thompson" lying in wait at every street corner, road-crossing, and car window, to attack you, with his cathartic grin, from flaming billboards advertising laxatives.

He is factory, kodak, phonograph, sewing-machine, cinema, Ford, tram, telephone, in the gentle, smiling isle of Queen Liliuokalani.

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He is self-exploitation, vulgarity and unbelief in pulpit, and—unbelief in pew.

He is funicular, crawling over snow-white breasts of the Jungfrau with beer saloon on top; and radiant Riviera pocked with "Faux-Arts" villas by "Beaux-Arts" architects.

He is trolly-car around pyramid and Sphinx of Cheops; tooting steamboat up and down the Grand Canal of Venice; and dam of commerce submerging the temple-crested island of Philæ.

He is black intestinal pipe-line gulping up sylvan cascades and crystalline water-falls, to digest them into factories, illuminated nostrums, "movies" and casinos.

He is frantic Press-hypnotized mob, fighting for smile of approbation from prize-fighting thug, film freak, political crook, and "Colossus of Swat," with salaries far exceeding that of the President of the United States.¹

He is Watt, Fulton, Edison, Marconi, Morse, Bell, and all the other scientific toxinators who have mechanized, enslaved and degraded man, annihilated art by annihilating segregation, destroyed handicraft by factory, sunk humanity into the "Black Ages" of democracy, and robbed life of the greatest of all luxuries—leisure and privacy, wherein alone can bloom faith, love, dream, refinement, imagination and individuality.

He is decadent monarch in "golf outfit," "tennis

¹ Dempsey was recently offered \$750,000 for one fight. A child of seven is receiving half a million dollars for acting in three films. The President of the United States receives a salary of \$75,000 per annum.

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suitings," "dress suit" and ingratiating kodak grin, cringing to decadent democracy.

He is vulgarized, bankrupt, effete, jazzing European aristocracy, supported by jazzing, democratic daughters of High Finance and Synagogue.

He is royal house of England, changing its family name in the face of the enemy; and the enemy swapping "von" for "van" and "de."

He is House of Lords become House of Commons, and House of Commons become House of Mobs.

He is eighty-five democratic New York couples being married in a body by Deputy-Clerk James McCormick.

He is chic sons and daughters, tangoing in chic casinos a week after their parent's death, with wine-soaked, food-crammed, wiggling, pigging, democratic society unshocked.

He is sanctified Chamber of Commerce, bluff, and bunkum; salon of motors; saloon of art; Rialto of religion; chapel of cinema; three ringed circus of progress, civilization, and uplift; and Corridor of Fame crowded with dancers, pugilists, mountebanks, swash-bucklers, suffragettes and clowns.

He is "arty" Zoo with musty dives and fusty cabarets, packed with monkeys, donkeys, parrots and geese; all Dionysians and supermen, all psycho-analytical geniuses of myriad complexes, and all chattering, braying, jibbering, honking, over new art, new thought, *New Republic*, free love, free verse, pure reason, pure science, pure socialism, pure rot; with Greenwich Village fur and "Rotundian" feather ruffling in contentious indignation at the very thought of comparing such antediluvian bourgeois as Phidias, Bach, Shakespeare,

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and Leonardo with their "Big Six" or "Big Nine" super-apes of latest "ists" and "isms." And this is what democratic education of the masses has done for buxom farmer lass, happy artisan lad and simple, honest country boy.

He is unending chains of processional caterpillars, blindly following, with sentimental earnestness and weary step, Baedeker, Cook, and other leaders of "educational offensives" and "culture drives," with hope of quickly returning home for the purpose of "putting it all over" the great mental unwashed, who have not yet been "Baedekered," "Cooked," seasoned and refined by European travel, and Encyclopædias of Social Etiquette showing one for a couple of dollars how to appear to be what one is not.

He is pseudology, pseudoism; adulterated food, mocado stuffs, dicky shirt front, dicky social front, dicky house front, and all modern dicky fronts; composition stone, artificial marble; counterfeit jewels, furs, lace, porcelain; faked "old masters"; tricked antiquities, "near" fabrics, "simile" tissues, fraudulent remedies, humbug lotions, trumpery tonics, spurious art, science, religion; feigned faith, mimic happiness, kodaked grief; mock manner, gesture, grin; bunkum altruism; bluff, sham, deception, fraud, cheat, and—imitation corpses fabricated in a United States factory and shipped to Egypt to be sold as mummies to unsuspecting tourists.

He is ("by special cable to the *Herald*") "Charles Mason, negro hod-carrier who, while on way to work, is arrested for speeding in his automobile."

He is democratized "Tribes of Osagian Indians,"

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gathering in Oklahoma for intertribal dances and arriving in expensive motor cars, piloted by drivers with silk shirts and top hats."

He is "Walrus and Carpenter" of business combines, trusts, monopolies and giant Democracies, "munchin'," "crunchin'," "punchin'," and "gobblin'" up, for the sacred cause of progress, humanity and civilization, defenceless little oysters, while weeping briny tears of pity and compassionate love as they feel them slipping by their insatiate palates into capacious self-righteous maws.

(NOTE.—As a God-fearing man, I fully realize that "to those who have shall be given"; but I resent seeing a luscious, goluptious meal guzzled up with Walrus, Carpenter, and democratic crocodile tears.)

He is Coney Island, Broadway, Brighton, Atlantic City, Trouville, Ostend, and all the other "magic cities" of "looping the loop," "bumping the bump," and "flying the coop," which are used as safety-valves for Democracy's bursting boiler of morbid egotism, self-consciousness, brutality, and proselytizing vulgarity.

He is debutante daughters and tea-pouring, jazzing, Einsteining mothers and grandmothers, from every city, town, village and hamlet; paragraphed and photographed in every newspaper, magazine and village weekly—and every one beautiful, popular, talented; and every one charity worker and art connoisseur; and every one exclusive; and every one democratic, psychic and perfectly unaffected; and every one a leader of the Smart Set; and all ultra modern, in new thought and new everything, including morals, houses, complexes, manners, husbands, auras, and—all living in mortal

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fear of being called reactionary, undemocratic and unscientific.

He is philanthropist, munificently endowing public schools, hospitals and libraries, with mountainous profits from munition, armament, and poison-gas factories.

He is Eileen Clossen and Sadie Palmer of Rochester, New York, fighting to a "knockout" with bare fists before five hundred spectators, for a Feminist who agreed to marry the winner of the bout.

He is soulless science, democracy and merciless machinery, ousting faith, gentle manners, dignity, self-expression, self-respect, reverence, tradition, hearth-love, obedience, and natural class distinction based on tradition, culture, talent, power and wealth.

He is ever-increasing herds of baffled, standardized, Taylorized, super-slaves, with engraved visiting cards of "Mr. and Mrs." as reassuring symbols of democracy; repeating the same gesture from dawn of youth to sunset of age, and mumbling about liberty, self-determination and equality in unholy stinking factory hells of shrieking, grinding machinery, which whitmanized, woolworthized, pullmanized, barnumized Marinettis, Stravinskys, Stanley Lees, Piccabias, Sandburgs, Cocteauss, Tristan Tzaras, Stardales, Huelsenbecks, Woolly-West and Tenderloin idealists rant, rave, squeak and squawk over as Valhallas for supermen.

He is Fifth Avenue, Euclid Avenue, Biarritz, Newport, Lake Shore Front, Baden-Baden, Dinard, Mayfair, Cannes, Avenue du Bois, of cosmopolitan, stereotyped, identicalized super-palace-hotel society, stuffing

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and puffing with food, jewels and motors; dancing and prancing; bobbing and snobbing; gambling, rambling and scrambling after money, notoriety and titles, and—all democrats, optimists, altruists, idealists, parlour socialists, and impassioned lovers of the “poor down-trodden people.”

He is Europe, weakened, corrupted, debauched, degenerated by democracy; placating and fêting at Genoa and The Hague, for purely venal purposes, the vilest and most heinous traitors to humanity, who, under the fiendish hypocrisy of Bolshevistic altruism, glut and sate their pathological vanity and lust for personal power with the flesh and blood of their defenceless countrymen.

He is sex-antagonism, pecking, clucking and scratching for the hen vote, in revenge for unchivalric wooing by the commercialized gamecock, who, no longer daring to herald in the dawn with royal clarion call, timidly awaits the factory whistle, while trailing his tail plumes in dust of sex-equality and democratic hypocrisy.

He is volcanic eruption of vanity and perverted egoism, burying honour, love, loyalty, friendship under Press and photographic lava of self-advertisement, self-exploitation and self-popularization.

He is standardized conventionality, moral cowardice, mob sycophancy, posing as individuality, originality, moral courage and independence.

He is bewildered bourgeois shocked and intimidated out of reason and pocket-book by fatuous folly, scientific tomfoolery, matter-of-coin viciousness, and calculated obscenity, of bunko-steerers and voodoos in modern art and literature.

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He is the *Topeka Kansas Journal*, "running the Bible as a 'snappy' serial, with an instalment every day, and lively newspaper headings for every incident."

He is America, falsifying all human values, and factoryizing, vulgarizing, patronizing, charlatanizing, equalizing, hypnotizing, standardizing the world.

He is bridge of scientific progression and spiritual retrogression, over which treacherous, sub-human, pitiless, satan-smiling shepherds are luring their befoozled, bamboozled flocks into camouflaged slaughter-houses of Communism, despair, madness and horror.

He is disappearance of mirth, sentiment, gladness, dream, melancholy, winsomeness, lyricism, purity, loveliness, spirituality, Colleonic majesty, grandeur, magnificence, serenity of countenance, nobility of manner, repose, dignity of gesture, sweetness of expression, gentleness, affection, humility, tenderness, refinement, elegance, romance, loyalty, chivalry, courtesy, leisure, tranquillity, mystery, honesty of purpose, simplicity, respect, naïveté, awe, wonder, charm, aloofness, privacy, asceticism, individuality, moral courage.

He is the blackest, most threatening and most unholy cloud that has ever hung over humanity.

Ezra P. Packer is—Democracy.

Mrs. Ezra P. Packer

Of medium height, elephantine, vigorous, buoyant, and around sixty years of age, with rubific-purple hair, brilliantly painted lips, and face thickly rouged and powdered. She creates the impression, with her roving, social, palace-hotel-corridor eye, of an entranced

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medium being paraded before the footlights of fashion by the procurers and hypnotists of the Rue de la Paix, who have corseted, dyed, bedecked, bejewelled and crowned her with every cunning and artifice of their vanities trades.

She is the good naïve sentimental type of American woman, born to swim in a pond but, having been swept by the rising flood of Packer millions into the sea of wealth and fashion, finds herself out of her depth and gasping for breath in desire to keep pace with her husband and daughter, and play the part expected of her by the world, newspapers and social magazines.

The most momentous dawn of her life was when she awoke in her brand new monumental Louis Quinze bed, adorned with gilded wreaths, bow knots, and vicious little cupids, which she bought with Ezra in a great department store shortly after they had installed their "Louis Quinze back parlour" behind a high stoop brown stone front in Brooklyn's most fashionable quarter.

At the same time in their antimacassared sitting-room two porcelain cuspidors, elaborately decorated with flowers, doves and amorettes, were stationed on either side of the gas-log fireplace, and on the tasselled plush-covered mantel, between alabaster urns under glass containing wax flowers, was posed a bronze Venus of Milo, with a clock encircled in rhinestones set in her stomach, while Mr. Packer's cherished large brass spittoon, which had occupied the place of honour on their previous hearth, was relegated, with crayon family portraits, a moth-eaten stuffed pug-dog with one remaining glass eye, an enormous conch-shell on which

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was painted a nude woman clinging to a rock at the base of a tempest-swept lighthouse, and other outgrown treasures, to his bedroom.

Having ascended into more exclusive social circles by the acquisition of this new "home," Mrs. Packer gradually became aware of the necessity of educating herself and husband up to their new level of friends and furniture, and soon their evenings were spent in repeating social catechisms from a widely read book on *Etiquette*, written by a retired French directress of a New York *haute monde* boarding-house in collaboration with an imported English ducal butler, who had enriched himself as major-domo in the services of an American tin-can King.

After they had become initiated into the sacred rights and holy mysteries of what to do, wear and say in "highest society," and had learned "how to dispose of cherry and grape stones; how to use the finger-bowl and napkin with the grace and ease that bespeak the supreme degree of culture; how to eat lettuce leaves and corn on the cob; how not to eat olives and radishes; what to say without embarrassment on upsetting a *demi-tasse*; how to sneeze elegantly, discreetly smother a yawn, conceal a hiccough behind a delicately poised hand," and innumerable other genteel accomplishments—they felt themselves sufficiently secure and equipped to begin their social campaign.

About that time, the august Ward McAllister (who has more fundamentally influenced his country in the last half century than any other American, with the possible exceptions of P. T. Barnum, C. D. Gibson, Joseph Pulitzer, Walt Whitman and Edison) and his

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Four Hundred were timidly beginning to tiptoe into the rising surf of Wagner and Browning, while the Paris Art Firm of Kougelman & Co., securely mounted on Schreier's Arab horses and escorted by Charles Jacques' pages, were scurrying up and down Fifth Avenue with Bougereau, Meissonier, and Henner in their train.

It was not long, therefore, before Mrs. Packer recognized that these names were necessary shibboleths for further social progress. She consequently joined a Browning Society, and urged Mr. Packer to buy a Jacques court scene; and the following winter even ventured to have a Wagner class, which was arranged and organized by her French Professor, who had become a cicerone of culture to Brooklyn's aristocracy after having changed his name from the Marquis of S. to the Count of A., and escaped from Paris, where he was wanted for various charges of swindling.

Mr. Packer had now turned his first million-dollar buoy, and under full sail was headed for the open sea of millions. Their next social cruise landed them in a large double brown stone mansion, the decoration of which, with the exception of the two embossed silver cuspidors—now referred to as "expectoratoons"—was entirely left to the rare taste and discretion of the Count, who "did them up" in grand Louis Quinze style from top to bottom while "doing up" his own pocket-book with Louis Quinze commissions.

The Packers again disposed of their latest set of friends and furniture, and assumed their new social duties, this time in "Brooklyn's élite," with a staff of servants, including an English butler, Swedish "second

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man," negro "odd man," French chef, Belgian lady's maid, Irish coachman, Danish footman, Norwegian kitchenmaid, and German, Swiss and Italian housemaids.

The Count, encouraged by his Packer windfall, was next heard of in Pittsburg, where he netted a millionairess, returned to Paris, silenced the police with his wife's purse, became a deputy, and later a pillar of Ritzonian society.

Shortly after this, Mrs. Packer realized that to be truly smart it was necessary to have a lover, and consequently set her teeth against her New England conscience in grim determination to be as *fashionable* as her newly acquired acquaintances. This was the most nerve-racking moment of her career; but she emerged from it triumphantly, with the complete satisfaction that she had complied with the exigencies of her new position, and had become a full-fledged society "Jubjub."

"As to temper the Jubjub's a desperate bird,
Since it lives in perpetual passion;
Its taste in costume is entirely absurd;
It is ages ahead of the fashion."

In their third social offensive they stormed the Brooklyn Bridge and took possession of an enormous Georgian residence on Madison Avenue, built for them by a chic young American architect, who had recently returned from Paris, where he had been thoroughly Latin quartered and *Beaux Arts*-ed. The interior furnishings were carried out by a mundane decorator, who, as far as her relations with the "Louis" were con-

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cerned, was perfectly pure; in fact the Packers were finally so entirely overcome by her purity that they would proudly point out on every possible occasion their door-handles, telephones, gramophones, toilets, and back stairs to their new set of friends as being "absolutely pure Louis Seize." The only impurities were the good Packers themselves, for even the cellar was *de l'époque*.

Had it not been for the war, the Packers would have probably died in the arms of "pure Louis Seize" on the fringes of New York's élite; but they were destined for still greater social glory.

At the moment of this play we find them shaking off, in true democratic style, their Louis Seize connections, and making their fourth democratic move into a superb new palace covering an entire block on democratic Fifth Avenue. Their palace this time has been gothic-ed and renaissanced by perfect undemocratic Semitic taste into a veritable art museum.

Miss Patricia Packer

About twenty-five years of age, unusually tall and svelte, with a beautiful small Pre-Raphaelite head, exquisitely poised, like an exotic flower, on a long delicate neck. Her lithe, flat, aristocratically angular figure, with elongated limbs, slender high-arched feet and thin tapering fingers, give her an ethereal look of old race and rare distinction seldom seen even among the noblest families of Europe. She, like many American girls, is so startlingly dissimilar, both physically and mentally, to her parents, that one wonders, on seeing them to-

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gether, if the family nest had not been surreptitiously visited by some royal mystical cuckoo while the old birds were out in fanatical pursuit of the early worm of wealth and social aggrandizement.

After the Packers had received innumerable snubs on account of their ignorance and lack of social training, they gradually realized the supreme importance of higher education and culture, and consequently determined to have their daughter given every possible advantage. They started therefore, from her earliest youth, to have her poor little head intensively stuffed and crammed with learning.

After she had been passed through minds of innumerable governesses, professors and instructors of music, singing, sculpture, dancing and drawing, and had attended every conceivable kind of perfecting and finishing class, her brain became like a grocery shop packed with predigested cultural foods, tabloids of religion, little tins of cold-storage art, extracts of philosophy, canned history, and compounds of science. These mental groceries she served out to her clients, after the fashion of American women, from behind her counter of knowledge and erudition, in neat little packages, tied up with precise little bows, to the unending delight of her proud and awe-struck parents.

At the age of seventeen Patricia Packer became secretly engaged to a young Brooklyn swell, whom she dropped (as her father did the cuspidor) for a Newport "week-ender" when her parents moved from Brooklyn to New York. Her second engagement was also of short duration, as the Packers gradually discovered through *Town Gossip* and officious friends that their daughter's fiancé was only a "near" Newporter.

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Her third venture was with an attaché of princely birth in the German Embassy. The war put a sudden end to this romance; her pangs of disappointment, however, soon disappeared in intensive Red Cross work.

The war came as a great blessing to Mrs. Packer and her daughter, who rapidly donated and hospitalled their way into medals, war decorations and the most restricted circles of New York and Paris society, while Mr. Packer was doubling fame and fortune in munition factories.

For almost three years the Packer name appeared daily in the foreign Press—Miss Packer asking to have old shoes sent to her address, while her mother specialized in shirts and underclothes for refugees.

Miss Packer, who might have stepped out of the pages of *Les Femmes Savantes*, regards with critical eye the younger generation of American girls, who, she declares, "are rapidly being whirlpooled by decadence into mental and moral chaos."

She, like many chic, up-to-date young ladies of the "exclusive set," is an ardent Socialist and a disciple of Marx. It is hardly necessary to add that *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The Masses*, and *The Freeman* are always to be found on her boudoir table, where Freud, Einstein and an Encyclopædia of Pornography, entitled *Ulysses*, containing the insane obscenities used by certain unfortunate creatures in Bedlam,¹ occupy

¹ In *The Dial*, Ezra Pound declares: "This super-novel . . . has more form than any novel of Flaubert's. 'All men should unite to give praise to *Ulysses*'; those who will not may content themselves with a place in the lower intellectual orders." Miss Patricia therefore extols Ezra, and deifies Joyce, who is now being superized by all of our super-critics. Rotundians, super-Ritzonians and Greenwichites hail him as a prophet; Syndicalists, Bolsheviks and Bedlamites idolize him.

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the place of honour. The latest foreign publications of Dadaists, Cubists, Fopists, Prigists, and Poppycockists are scattered about. Her mother, however, in spite of her daughter's sneers, still surreptitiously clings to *Town Topics* and *The Club Fellow*.

Over the mantel in her boudoir hangs one of Piccacia's most masterful pictures, *The Insides of a Gatling Gun*, which has replaced the famous painting of a gollywogging polyhogging lady by Matisse, whom Miss Packer considers to be "really rather too academic."

Recently Miss Packer allowed herself to be discovered by several of her intimate friends seated before her Piccacia in tearful ecstasy over the latest volume of poems by "The Super Seven." This volume has been reviewed in innumerable magazines as "One of the most interesting symptoms in the whole literary world, and its publication is very nearly a public obligation." It has even been recognized by the Rev. Percy Pant to be the apotheosis of poetical expression, and the Rev. Percy in his turn is recognized by the seven supermen authors to be the greatest critic in the history of world literature. The following poem is one of the most exquisite of the collection, and I believe it to be the one which brings tears of appreciation to Miss Packer's eyes, and æsthetic tremors to the Rev. Percy Pant:—

Psychoanalytical Cockscombs

pale anæmic ascetic poles
Telegraph poles
seeking goals

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Phantasmagorically
through pellucid
Peri

helions
pervasive vacuousness of
wires isochronously
Vibrating to Virginal Vertigo
goya Heliogabulous Red carnations
blood for evermore Metadore
Oh Christ of Triakisicosahedronic wounds
Oh Andalusian harl
ot
god Nevermore Heartbroken
Come Papilionaceously with
Yellow leaf and black spots
Western Union
pale anæmic ascetic poles
Seeking goals
Bleeding heart
nevermore

At the present moment the socialistic Miss Patricia is being manœuvred by her socialistic friend the Duchess of Mandelieu into a royal marriage with a cousin of the King of the Belgians.

Oscar Cadman

A tall, self-conscious, emaciated, sallowish, lantern-jawed young man about twenty-eight, with pale eyes, pale hair, and pale personality, into which he has

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injected homœopathic doses of U.S.A. "pep" and "punch."

Although he was born with Scottish, Swedish, German and French blood in his veins, he has been so well stewed in the GREAT MELTING-POT into a pure American type that he could be recognized a block off as one of "God's own."

From the study of pamphlets and books, concocted in American laboratories of psychology, on new methods of obtaining success, he has acquired, among other accomplishments, the intensely earnest and virilely frank, buoyant, arrivist manner which we are assured in this optimistic literature—showing how any fool may transmute himself into a genius—inspires commercial confidence—the only confidence, by the way, apparently necessary in this epoch.

He has, in truth, so successfully soaked himself in every form of scientific and democratic earnestness of manner, that he has become, like all democrats and modern scientists, painfully serious over nothing, even to the extent of putting religious fervour into his "how-do-do," and fanatical sincerity into his "pleased to meet you," which stereotyped greetings he invariably "gets off" on all introductory occasions with a second-class Rooseveltian "he-man" hand-shake.

Our women are also rapidly adopting this successful manner, which has already been carried into Europe, and is now being made most lucrative and advantageous use of by eager shop, financial, and casino folk of all nations.

Among political stars, Lloyd George and Briand are excellent examples of it; but they and their con-

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fraternity have been so influenced by the American domination that they even endeavour to tog and rig themselves up in proletarian masquerade of our Jeffersonian politicians, who for some time have realized the futility of bomb and cannon, and have now started out in grim earnest to Americanize humanity with Christian, social and commercial suggestion-science, backed up by their already victorious armies of Press, 'phone, Ford, jazz, phonograph, cinema, kodak, palace-hotel, bill-board, baseball, canned-food, cold-storage, and every kind of hocus-pocus machine and rattle-trap invention.

European politicians have not yet, however, quite arrived at the carefully studied democratic fancy dress of some of our Western members of House and Senate, who, with interchangeable masks of joviality and almost terrifying altruistic earnestness, realize the vast political and financial benefits derived from a shabby, greasy, humanitarian, humorous, valiant, brotherly-love, vote-catching slouch hat; an intellectually shiny, pater-familias, unadulterous, patriotic, Lincolnian, philosophically-fitting frock coat; honest, simple, virile, loyal, manly, shapeless, up-toed boots; baggy, optimistic, kind, generous, good-natured, industrious, sentimental old pants; an unbuttoned, affectionate, royal-good-fellow, plain-people, normalcy, public-servant waistcoat; and frayed linen, washed with domestic economy, and glazed with irons of civic virtue.

At the time of America's entrance into the war Oscar was a senior in Cornell University, where he had been sent from a small farm in the Middle West by his sweat-of-the-brow hard-working parents who, by

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giving their son a college education, fulfilled their most cherished dream.

Oscar soon began to simmer and sizzle with war fever. He finally ignited, burst into flame, and was among the first flock of Majors to arrive in Paris at the moment when all Americans living in France were blossoming into maple leaves, acorns, Sam-Browns and spurs, although the only horses they had seen for years were equestrian statues in bronze and marble, and their knowledge of cannon was limited to ancient trophies in front of the Invalides, which was as near as most of them ever got to the front (the Author included). The only person who could probably give a satisfactory answer as to why our Knights of Aeroplane, Red Cross and Christian Associations wore spurs, is the White Knight in *Alice in Wonderland*.

It was a bitter blow and cruel disappointment to Oscar's parents when he returned in khaki to his little home town to bid them farewell before leaving for the front, and even harsh words were exchanged between them. Oscar declared that his parents were too material, ignorant and uneducated to understand the necessity of "making the world safe for democracy," of "saving civilization" and of "waging a war of right over might to end wars."

"Your ma and me ain't got no book learnin'," retorted his old Scandinavian father, "but if this higher education stuff fills your poor head with such darn silly, rotten reasons as that for fightin', ve're sorry ve've chucked our hard-earned savin's into the gutter in givin' it to you. And to think I voted for Vilson

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just because he vas 'too proud to fight,' and vas going to keep us out of this filthy var of poison gases."

On the day of Oscar's departure, however, the family unity was re-established by a brass band, waving flags, alcohol, and shouting townsmen, who proudly escorted their Major to the train. After this patriotic send-off, his old parents returned home with tears of joy and pride, and that evening the Stars and Stripes floated over their farm.

On the same day that Oscar arrived on a transport at Bordeaux, fired and impassioned with the holy cause of crusading democracy, Boukané Fall, an African negro, whose entire family, along with most of the natives of his peace-loving agricultural village, had been scientifically wiped out by European democracy, was landed at Marseilles with a contingent of midnight blacks, who had been conscripted to defend the sacred cause of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" and "right over might," and thoroughly palavered and "propaganded" with such slogans as "a war to end wars," and "to make the world safe for the blacks." They were also informed that they were to save democracy, science and civilization from blood-drinking, man-eating Huns, the most terrible enemies of Mahomet and worshippers of a colossal statue in Berlin representing a monstrous green war devil. But as Boukané had not been given the advantage of mass education, he was too pitifully ignorant to appreciate the impassioned truth and inspired altruism of the above doctrines which Oscar, on the contrary, owing to his university training, was immediately enabled to accept as gospel.

But as we hear from all sidès that time is money, and

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not wishing to rob our busy, buzzy, telephoned, motored, transatlanticized, wirelessly, subwayed, commuted, jazzed, standardized, culture-stuffed, Baedekered, newspapered, magazined, palace-hoteled, psycho-analyzed, super-hygiened, phonographed, cinemad, rushed, hustled, bustled, tussled readers of both,¹ we will condense Oscar into the following capsule:—Our hero emerged from the war with flying colours, returned to New York, looked for a job, and, “not being a business coward,” invested in success-literature, thereby “increasing his mental stature with the secret of fifteen minutes a day”; learned the “cultured, correct way of how to behave in every embarrassing situation”; “how the newsboy became a great inventor and multimillionaire”; “how to write short stories that actually sell themselves, and movie stories for big pay”; “how not to displease a purchasing agent with halitosis”; “why Jones missed his great chance”; “how to pronounce such foreign words as *chic*, *lingerie*, *faux-pas*, *cabaret*, *Carpentier*, *Dostoyevsky*, *Landru*, *Baudelaire*, *demi-tasse*, *demi-monde*, *demi-vierge*, *demi-castor*, and all the other *demis*”; “how to exhibit distinction and high breeding by correct, elegant introductions”; “how to be cultivated by everyone in the Smart Set of your home town”; “how to give wonderful parties, which unfrazzle nerves and tickle people pink”; “how to develop word power”; “how to sell through speech”; “how to impress others with your bed-rock character”; “how to read, love, think, live and make binding friendships on wasteless principles”; “how to be nominated

¹ “Happiness consists in leisure,” wrote Aristotle. Socrates praised leisure as the fairest of all possessions.

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for the Hall of Fame"; and, in fact, "how to become one of America's snappy geniuses."

Unlike Jones, who missed his great chance through psychological ignorance of the "smile and manner which carry conviction," Oscar, when the opportunity to make good was offered to him by Packer, knew how to return "the smile of fortune," and "grasp the big job with the manner that spells success."

Patrick Mulligan Sweeny, Mayor of New York

A bulky, bald-headed, short-legged, penguin-built man of medium height, in the middle forties, with glittering, watchful, pin-head eyes sunk into the gristly fat of a bulbous, formless, smooth-shaven, pasty face. He has the sly, sardonic, predatory smile of certain amphibia and deep-sea monsters, who camouflage themselves for defensive and offensive purposes into floating logs, or barnacled rocks, or lumps of mud. In like manner does our good Mayor Sweeny, under camouflage of hearty handshake, hail-fellow-well-met, and democratic bluff and bluster, gulp up votes from his unsuspecting quarry. On oratorical occasions he exudes altruism¹ from every pore and squirts out

¹ I never fully appreciated the heroic unselfishness of our political altruists who have consecrated their lives to the uplift of humanity until I came across the following passage wherein Mr. Pecksniff informs us that he even digests his food for the benefit of his fellow men. "The process of digestion," declares this altruistic utilitarian, "is one of the most wonderful works of nature . . . it is a great satisfaction to me to know, when regaling on my humble fare, that I am putting in motion the most beautiful machinery with which we have any acquaintance. I really feel at such times as if I was doing a public service.

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obsequious flattery over his constituents and brother-citizens, whom in his democratic heart he despises.

For his sisters he has a softer spot. After the above description of him in the flesh, it may surprise and even "discomboberate" some of my more sentimental readers to know that he has always had amazing success with the "lovely ladies" of all ages, and in all classes of life, whom apparently he fascinates with his brutal, bullying, "he-man" manner. Although an anti-feminist at heart, he is careful to conceal from the public his true sentiments concerning women, realizing the necessity of working up the blarney bunkum of sex-equality, in order to catch the woman's vote.

He is in a way the modern Don Juan, and owes his prosperity in great measure to his biological knowledge and understanding of the weaknesses of the fair sex, who always succumb to the successful, triumphant male symbolizing the spirit of their time: in days of chivalry it was Knight-Errant and Troubadour; in religious periods it was Crusader; in the Renaissance and other art epochs it was Artist; in war it was Warrior; and in our commercial democratic age of machine, billboard, and laboratory it is Sweeny. This twentieth-century Lothario looks as if he might have been extracted with triple nickel-plated, patented forceps from the womb of a boiler; suckled from the brass teats of an automatic slot-machine; cradled in a taxi side-car; brought up on canned and artificial food in a machine shop; educated by the venal brutal daily Press in fac-

When I have wound myself up, if I may employ such a term, and know that I am going, I feel that in the lesson afforded by the works within me, I am a benefactor to my kind."—DICKENS.

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tories decorated by mountebank Cubists and worked by standardized Union slaves. At present he is living on the thirtieth floor of a super-palace hotel overlooking a world of glass, steel, concrete and bristling factory spires belching forth the black scientific soot of democratic fraud and imitation.

Shortly after his "lovely cousin"—now the Duchess of Mandelieu—left him to marry old Blumenberg, he corralled a well-to-do widow and, as he put it, "cinched her up as Mrs. Sweeny." After having increased his wife's fortune tenfold through judicious police-grafting, he was rich enough to afford the luxury of being moderately honest as Mayor.

His brilliant career was, however, very nearly cut short at one time by an intrigue he was carrying on with a famous beautiful leader of the Suffragettes, whose husband, a conspicuous New York clubman, committed suicide on surprising his wife with the Mayor—not in platonic dalliance, but in *flagrante delicto*. It took all Mayor Sweeny's ingenuity and political pull to have it conclusively proven in the Press, by accommodating neurologists and psychiatrists, that he was in no way responsible for the suicide, as the husband was a victim of hallucinations and suffered from persecution mania.

In vicissitude and success Pat's instinctive respect, devotion, consideration and generosity for his old mother have been unfailing. He also has the open-handed liberality and lavish hospitality rarely, if ever, met with outside of the United States, except possibly among Russians and South Americans.

To-day, "P.M.," as he is affectionately dubbed in

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New York, is worth several million dollars, and is one of the most highly esteemed and respected Mayors New York City has ever had.

An heroic-size statue of him is at the present moment being executed by a beautiful young American sculptress, who is already infinitely more celebrated than Michelangelo ever dreamed of being.

This monument, to which "P.M." was the principal subscriber, is shortly to be erected in his home town of Squeedunk by a committee of proud citizens, who have been so impressed by the political triumphs and Press notoriety of their former townsman, that they have all endeavoured to pattern themselves on him; some imitating his manner and gesture, others his speech, and all swapping stories of their good old school days when "Patsey Sweeny was one of the boys." All of which is rather odd, as he was the most detested boy who ever attended the Squeedunk High School, and for years was known as "Stinker Pat." We feel sure, however, that the Beaver and the Butcher, who were members of the "Bellman's crew," would have found nothing surprising in the above situation.

And now—"make way! the play may begin."

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ACT I

A garden close in Normandy, in the late afternoon of a sunlit Summer day, 1919. To left is a picturesque, two-storeyed seventeenth-century cottage, vine-covered, with overhanging eaves. It is of greyish-pink stucco, beautifully patined by time and weather with glazings of ochres and cool bluish-greys.

The wing of the cottage runs diagonally across left rear corner, forming an oblique angle with the high lichen-covered stone wall which encloses the garden and separates it from the high road. In the wall to right rear is a low, narrow, arched entrance, closed by a solid oaken door studded with large square nail heads, and hung on heavy decorative iron hinges.

To the right is a long low out-building overgrown with ivy. It has a studio window, and door leading into garden.

In the centre is an ancient stone well-head of Renaissance design, mounted on two great weather-beaten stone slabs, forming steps. The well-head is crowned with a fine old wrought-iron framework, from which is suspended a wheel with chains for bucket. Encircling the well are large irregular mossy paving stones, with grass and an occasional little flower sprouting from the interstices.

Along the walls run flower-borders, bright with roses, lupins and lavender. On either side of garden gate are two centenarian yews, neatly clipped

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in pyramid form. A wise old spreading elm rises in left foreground. Around its base is a rustic bench, near which there is a table and several rattan garden chairs with chintz cushions.

The only discordant note to the calm peaceful dignity and refinement of this lovely fragrant old-world corner is a hideous, flamboyant bill-poster, erected in a field on the other side of the high road, and dominating both house and garden. In the hills beyond, other garish signboards are seen. On the one just over the wall is painted an enormous head of "Loyal Painless Thompson," universally celebrated for his cathartics. His mean, unscrupulous, lantern-jawed, chalky jackal face seems to be leering with contemptuous superiority out of the modern world of charlatanism, sham and militant vulgarity, into the gentle, secluded, spiritual refinement of the past. On a glaring blue background, in gigantic blazing yellow letters, which strike you like a blow between the eyes, and from which there is no possible escape, is written: "Loyal Painless Thompson's luscious little Lollipops for lazy languid Livers." And below is the following slogan in both French and English:—"We work while you dream"; "Nous travaillons pendent que vous revez." As no description in these days is complete without at least one "super," I might add that "Loyal Painless Thompson's" face is charged with super-vulgarity and falseness. His daughter, too, is charged with super-cheek and chic, having married Prince Gigolo Gogo, whose mother was Miss

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Vogelheim of St. Louis, daughter of the famous philanthropist and democratic king of "Vogelheim's Vitaphospho Varieties."

Before curtain rises, a few long mournful notes of a flute are heard. The scene opens with JOHN BROWN seated in right foreground in front of easel, wearing a long white artist blouse. He continues to sound a few more notes on his flute, and then, laying it aside, takes up palette and brushes, and begins to paint. On the ground there are several small canvases leaning against his chair.

MRS. BROWN—[*Appearing in cottage window.*] John, dear, how is the picture getting on?

JOHN—Not very well, mother. Some days it's so difficult.

MRS. BROWN—Don't fret over it, dear boy. [*Aside, with expression of sorrow, and eyes uplifted.*] Ah, my poor child! My poor boy! [*Disappears from window.*]

JOHN—[*Dreamily.*] If father were only here. He was the only one who could show me how. He always used to say: "Now, John, don't get discouraged, and keep your mind on your picture, and some day you will be a great painter." I wonder why God took him and my little cousin Marie away. I loved my little cousin Marie so much. She was so kind, and liked my pictures. She promised to marry me when I became a man. It takes so long to become a man. Perhaps I shall never become one now. I always think of her at this time, before the sun begins to go away.

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[*On road behind garden wall an automobile comes to a sudden stop and voices are heard.*]

FIRST MAN'S VOICE—Damn the tyres, the dust, the Virgin, art, and everything!

SECOND MAN'S VOICE—What wouldn't I give for a cup of tea!

FIRST MAN'S VOICE—Let's look in here. There must be a restaurant somewhere.

[*Clampering sounds are heard, and the heads of ISAAC KUGELMAN and JOSEPH ROSENGARTEN, wearing Red Cross army caps and automobile goggles, appear above high garden wall. They have evidently found something on which to mount.*]

KUGELMAN—There's a chap painting in the corner.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Suppressed voice.*] Be careful! don't let them see you. They're awfully cranky about their privacy over here. We're not in America, you know.

KUGELMAN—Privacy! How about their public urinals? That's where privacy ought to be—in toilets, not in gardens! We don't need walls in God's own country.

ROSENGARTEN—The only privacy in America is in jails and asylums. [*Seeing servant, they vanish suddenly.*]

ELLEN—[*Appears on threshold of house, just in time to see the two heads disappear. With strong Irish brogue.*] Americans sure! [*Bell rings; she goes to open gate.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*To ELLEN.*] Pardon, est-ce qu'il y a un restaurant dans le village?

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ELLEN—If it's a restaurant you're after wantin', there's none before you get to Belleville, about two miles along the high road.

ROSENGARTEN—Oh, I see! We're looking for a cup of tea somewhere, while the chauffeur changes the tyre.

KOUGELMAN—We've just had a blow-out.

MRS. BROWN—[*Appearing on doorstep.*] Ellen, what is it?

ELLEN—Two gentlemen, mum, asking for a ristorante. It's busted their motor is, and they're after a coop of tea.

MRS. BROWN—[*To gentlemen.*] Oh! I'm afraid you won't get any tea in this little village; but won't you wait in the garden?

KOUGELMAN—[*Entering garden, followed by ROSENGARTEN.*] That's very kind! We've just burst a tyre.

ROSENGARTEN—What a lovely garden, and this little cottage—seventeenth-century, I should say. It's most artistic.

MRS. BROWN—My husband was an artist.

ROSENGARTEN—Oh, an artist! Is that your husband painting over there? [*Looking towards JOHN.*]

MRS. BROWN—[*Embarrassed.*] No—no, that's my son. He—he——

ROSENGARTEN—I'd so much like to see his canvas. [*He starts to walk towards JOHN.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Ingratiatingly.*] We're artists too, you know.

ROSENGARTEN—Well—hardly artists, but art lovers.

MRS. BROWN—[*Troubled and confused.*] Oh, you see—ch—well, you see—my son, he's not very well—er—he's never quite grown up—you understand. We

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encourage him to paint—it's the best distraction—and he seems to love it, the poor child. John, these gentlemen want to look at your picture.

JOHN—[*Who has remained oblivious to strangers looks up from work.*] Yes, mother. [*With sudden burst of childish enthusiasm.*] You see, those are all trees marching along the river, for trees march, you know, up and down hill, like soldiers. And over here is the tree that is leading them, because he is so much older, and knows so much more.

ROSENGARTEN—[*As if he were speaking to a little child.*] I understand, my dear boy. He is the father tree, isn't he?

JOHN—[*Eagerly picking up another canvas.*] Yes! Yes! and here is a picture with father in it. And these are the steps winding up to God, and flowers are all over everywhere. And you see up on the top of the steps is my little cousin Marie. And there is father looking out of the window.

MRS. BROWN—[*Under her breath.*] Poor child!

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, of course; it's very good, it's very good indeed! I love pictures.

JOHN—Do you make pictures too?

ROSENGARTEN—No, we don't make pictures; we make artists. [*Glances at KOUGELMAN.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Under his breath.*] I should say we did!

JOHN—My father said I would be a great artist some day if I worked hard.

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, you will surely be a great artist some day, my dear boy. A great artist—a great artist. [*He puts hand to forehead as if suddenly*

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struck by an idea. Aside, with suppressed excitement.]
By Jove! A great artist! Why not? [*He then starts to pace up and down in deep meditation. JOHN resumes painting.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*To MRS. BROWN:*] What a fortunate distraction for him, madam.

MRS. BROWN—Yes. I encourage him in it, as it makes him so happy. Perhaps you and your friend would like to have tea here in the garden?

KOUGELMAN—Y^{es} are really too hospitable.

MRS. BROWN—Oh no, not at all! [*Calling:*] Ellen! Ellen! [*ELLEN appears.*] Bring tea for these two gentlemen, and buttered scones and toast.

ELLEN—[*From doorway:*] Yes, mum, right away. [*Aside:*] 'Tis Americans have a way with 'em to get what they want.

KOUGELMAN—I am truly embarrassed by such kindness, madam. J.R., we've been invited to tea by this most hospitable lady.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Awakening as out of a dream.*] To tea! To tea! Oh, how gracious of you; how very gracious, madam! [*Relapses into abstraction, and continues nervously pacing up and down, with occasional swift glances at JOHN.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*To MRS. BROWN:*] So you've been living here a long time?

MRS. BROWN—For over thirty years.

KOUGELMAN—A long time indeed; but it's such a lovely place, and the village and everything is so picturesque.

MRS. BROWN—My husband loved it here. He hated big towns and cities.

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KOUGELMAN—I can understand that, of course, as he was an artist. But, not being French, don't you find it a trifle lonely?

MRS. BROWN—Ah, no! I couldn't think of living elsewhere. We were so happy here. My husband was such a wonderful character. And now I live in the memory of it all.

KOUGELMAN—Have you been a widow long?

MRS. BROWN—Fifteen years. He left us fifteen years ago, and everything is just as it was then.

ELLEN—[*Re-entering with tea-tray, on which are cups, saucers, etc.*]—Where shall I set the tea, mum?

MRS. BROWN—You can put it over there on the little table, Ellen. [To KOUGELMAN:] She is such a faithful old woman; she has been with us all these years.

KOUGELMAN—So rare in these days.

MRS. BROWN—[*Addressing ROSENGARTEN, who has stopped for a moment and is silently watching JOHN paint:*] My son's pictures amuse you?

ROSENGARTEN—[*With almost stern seriousness.*] They do, madam. I'm profoundly interested, most profoundly interested.

KOUGELMAN—[*To himself.*] What's the matter with him?—walking up and down like that and everything.

MRS. BROWN—[*To KOUGELMAN.*] Your friend has a kind heart.

KOUGELMAN—Yes, he certainly has. He's an extraordinary man.

MRS. BROWN—Perhaps you would like to see some of my husband's pictures?

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KOUGELMAN—I would indeed! Did he paint landscapes?

MRS. BROWN—Yes. They are so beautiful. Unfortunately I have only a few. Will your friend come too?

KOUGELMAN—J.R., we're going in to see the pictures.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Still circling about JOHN.*] I'll come in a minute. Yes——

KOUGELMAN—[*To himself.*] He's getting cracked too; it's the atmosphere.

MRS. BROWN—My poor child loves to show his pictures. It's so pathetic.

KOUGELMAN—It must be a great sorrow——

MRS. BROWN—It really killed my husband. He grieved over it so when he finally realized. [*They disappear into house.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*To JOHN.*] You've done lots of these pretty pictures?

JOHN—[*Still painting.*] Oh yes, lots and lots.

ROSENGARTEN—And where are they all?

JOHN—Over there in father's studio. That's my play-room, you know. It's all covered with pictures. Mother lets me keep them all.

ROSENGARTEN—And what do you play at over there?

JOHN—Oh, I play at making pictures all day long.

ROSENGARTEN—And do your friends like your pictures?

JOHN—I have no friends. My pictures and my flute are my friends. In the village they call me "*pauvre fou*." That means "poor fool." Mother says French people always call foreigners fools.

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ROSENGARTEN—What a wise mother you have.

JOHN—I love my mother dearly. She gives me all the paint and canvases I want to catch my dreams with. Do you dream of butterflies, and angels, and clouds, and flowers, and Jesus, too?

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, my dear boy; and I'm having a wonderful dream now—the most wonderful dream I've ever had—and you are to make it come true. You will help me make it come true, won't you? [*Gently pats JOHN's head.*]

JOHN—Shall I paint a picture of your dream?

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, many, many pictures of my dream; and then it will all come true.

JOHN—Is that a picture of your dream on your sleeve?

ROSENGARTEN—The torch! No, that's a picture of a dream of the Young Men's Christian Association. It's the torch of Light and Truth, to bring happiness wherever we go.

JOHN—Is that why you came in here to-day, to bring happiness to us all?

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, that's why we came in here to-day. And I shall begin by being your friend, your big, kind friend; and we will play at making pictures together.

JOHN—And will you dress me like a soldier of happiness, so that everyone may see that I do good, like you?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Faintly smiling.*] Yes, my dear John, we will dress you as a soldier of Art, and you will become my great soldier, and win many battles and medals.

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JOHN—With guns and cannons?

ROSENGARTEN—No, with pictures, your pictures. And when you are not making pictures we'll go and see all sorts of wonderful things together—gardens of beautiful flowers, and rooms and rooms of pictures; and we will go to circuses and see the elephants and giraffes, and spotted tigers, and roaring lions, and horses jumping through hoops of fire.

JOHN—[*Delighted.*] Oh, I love the circus! My mother always takes me to Belleville when it comes.

ROSENGARTEN—But that's only a little village circus. The great big circus is in Paris. That's where our battlefield will be. Wouldn't you like to go to Paris with me?

JOHN—[*Decisively.*] My mother wouldn't let me.

ROSENGARTEN—I think I can make your mother say yes. But do take me into the play-room. I want to see all your lovely pictures. Does it take you long to make a picture?

JOHN—[*Putting aside brushes and getting up.*] Sometimes it takes me a long time, but when I feel that father is near me, and I hear his voice, I do them very quickly. My play-room is here. [*They disappear into studio, right.*]

ELLEN—[*While preparing tea has overheard conversation between ROSENGARTEN and JOHN.*] Now what's he a-goin' in there with my poor boy for? And what's all this about circuses, and pictures, and soldiers of happiness? Them is no real soldiers or me name ain't Ellen. Them is just play soldiers. 'Tis queer and nervous-like they make me feel. Me sister Bridget, what lives in the States, has been writin' me this many

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a year that we're all dead and buried over here, and that America's a grand place. She's married to a fine policeman of the Auld Countree, and she says us Irish runs New York. I would have jined her if it hadn't been for the master. I can hear him a-sayin' now: "Ellen, keep away from America. Them is a dangerous people. They fill your pockets with gold, and steal away your soul and peace of mind, like the divil himself." And sure they did divil the life out of the master just afore he died, with their sign-boards in the field yonder. "That's America," says he, "a-blottin' out God's own heaven with their dirty signs of soaps and hair tonics and pills. American propaganda, making you think you've got a pain in your innards, or having you lie awake a' nights afeard of losin' every blessed hair on your head unless you buy their nasty stuff." Sure! and I'll never forget the day when the master found one of them there "We work while you dream" bottles in me kitchen drawer, which I bought in Belleville. "Damn it!" says he, a-shootin' flames from his eyes. "How dare you bring this into my house! I thought you had more character than to let yourself be caught by that pop-eyed, grinnin' idiot on the sign." "It was stronger than me, sor," says I. "From every window I sees that face, and all day long I sees it, by moonlight and sunlight and starlight, and when I begins to see 'Loyal Painless Thompson' a-smilin' at me in me dreams, 'Ellen,' says I to meself, 'there's no use a-fightin' agin it; buy his bottle of luscious little lollipops for lazy livers and be done with it.'" "Good God!" says the master, flingin' the pills through the window, "America has us by the throat

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and is a-marchin' in upon us with factories, sign-boards, cinemas, and their blackmailin' Press, and all their other dirty contraptions and inventions of Satan himself." . . . [*Her curiosity leads her towards the studio door, which has been left open. Peeping in.*] Still lookin' at my poor lamb's pictures, all full of ghostly flowers and spooky trees. God bless his poor crazy brain! And little black scarecrows, what he calls his father, a-peepin' at us from heaven, along with poor little Miss Marie, the only playmate he ever had, a-squattin' on a sort of pinky cloud.

[*Re-enter MRS. BROWN from house with KOU-
GELMAN, who is holding a letter.*]

MRS. BROWN—Ellen, is tea ready?

ELLEN—[*Startled.*] Yes, mum. It's all on the table, mum.

MRS. BROWN—Where is Master John?

ELLEN—He's taken the gentleman into the play-room.

MRS. BROWN—[*To KOUGELMAN.*] My poor child seems to have taken a great fancy to your friend. He never asks anyone into his play-room.

KOUGELMAN—Really! [*Earnestly.*] You know, Mrs. Brown, I'm astounded by your husband's pictures. What tonality! His composition is superb. And this letter to your husband from such a celebrity as Mr. Simonds!

MRS. BROWN—He was such a sincere character too.

KOUGELMAN—Simonds was admitted to be the greatest art critic of the century.

MRS. BROWN—I know he was. He was a great friend of ours.

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KOUGELMAN—Why is it, with such appreciation as that, and the beauty of your husband's pictures, that I never heard of him? It's great art; he was a great artist.

MRS. BROWN—Mr. Simonds wrote it just before he died, when my husband was preparing a large exhibition of his works in Paris. My husband had a horror of the Salon; the only salon of the day, he said, was the Automobile Salon. In fact he had withdrawn from all art circles. For years he allowed no one to see his pictures. He was afraid of being cheaply copied before he had made his reputation. You can see how entirely individual his work is.

KOUGELMAN—Most original! Most creative! But what has become of all his pictures?

MRS. BROWN—Ah! that was what I was going to tell you. It was all so tragic, so very tragic! He had shipped his entire exhibition to a friend's studio, and a few days before they were to be sent to the gallery the studio and everything was burned.

KOUGELMAN—What a tragedy! What a terrible loss to art!

MRS. BROWN—All I have left are the pictures you have seen. This loss really hastened his death, as he had already made himself ill grieving over our son.

KOUGELMAN—How cruel life can be!

MRS. BROWN—Art for him was sacred; it was his life; and the modern spirit was a nightmare to him.

KOUGELMAN—There is certainly much ugliness in the modern spirit, but we must have progress, I suppose.

MRS. BROWN—[*Smiling.*] Progress! How my poor

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husband hated that word! That's the word the Mayor of Belleville used when my husband tried to remove these appalling advertising signs from this lovely little village. What a blight they are!

KOUGELMAN—But didn't the mayor try to help you?

MRS. BROWN—Unfortunately not. We discovered that a French chef, who had made his fortune in America, had taken the mayor into partnership with him in a local advertising company.

KOUGELMAN—[*Facetiously.*] Your mayor might be called the nightmare of Belleville!

MRS. BROWN—That would have amused my husband. You wouldn't believe how the sentiment of the countryside has changed since that chef returned from America.

KOUGELMAN—I can well believe it.

MRS. BROWN—The peasants have all been spoiled by the cinema and dance hall he started in Belleville. The young people are debauched by it. They used to be so simple and polite. Now they are pretentious and rude. The chef laughed them out of their sabots and pretty caps.

KOUGELMAN—I suppose he thought them undemocratic.

MRS. BROWN—Yes. On Sundays now you see them in feather hats and high heels.

KOUGELMAN—I'm afraid you have a bad opinion of us Americans.

MRS. BROWN—[*Slightly embarrassed.*] Oh, excuse me; I did not realize you were an American. They

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must be a wonderful people. Every nation, I think, has its good points as well as its bad ones.

KOUGELMAN—Of course! Of course!

MRS. BROWN—But, being an American, it surprises me to see how much interested you are in art.

KOUGELMAN—Art! But that's my life's work. I live for art.

MRS. BROWN—[*Surprised.*] You do?

KOUGELMAN—[*Ostentatiously taking card from gold-bordered, monogrammed alligator-skin card-case.*] May I give you my card? Perhaps you've heard of me, as my galleries are so well known in Paris, New York and London.

MRS. BROWN—[*Reading card.*] Isaac Kougelman! Why, is that the Kougelman Gallery?

KOUGELMAN—[*With patronizing, self-satisfied smile.*] Quite so!

MRS. BROWN—I remember my husband took me there many years ago to see a collection of Watteau's drawings. So you are Mr. Kougelman?

KOUGELMAN—Yes. My grandfather started the firm.

MRS. BROWN—Oh! that's such a well-known name in art. Is your friend associated with you?

KOUGELMAN—Yes; he's a great connoisseur. He is known everywhere in the art world as "J.R." His name is Joseph Rosengarten. Perhaps you have heard of him? Everyone knows J.R.

MRS. BROWN—No. But since my husband's death I have lived so much out of the world——

KOUGELMAN—He has a wonderful intuition and *flair*. He has discovered many of the greatest artists

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and poets of the day and helped to make them famous.

MRS. BROWN—He must be a very clever man. But, Mr. Kougelman, I'm afraid your tea will be quite cold.

KOUGELMAN—Thank you so much. I had really forgotten about it. Art is so absorbing. I will call J.R.

MRS. BROWN—I'll see you a little later. [KOUGELMAN bows ceremoniously. *She enters house.*]

KOUGELMAN—By Jove! They are wonderful pictures. Wait till J.R. sees them! What a pity so few are left. We could have made a fortune out of them. [ROSENGARTEN enters from studio with a number of canvases under his arm.] Goodness sakes, J.R., what on earth have you been doing with that poor fool? I haven't been wasting my time. I've made a wonderful discovery. [*He pours himself out a cup of tea.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Still absorbed.*] You have?

KOUGELMAN—The old lady's husband was a genius. They are wonderful pictures. You should see the letter Simonds wrote him! And Simonds backing an artist is even better than Heinz behind a pickle.

ROSENGARTEN—My poor Isaac! Simonds died fifteen years ago. You have the brain sometimes of an early Christian martyr.

KOUGELMAN—Well! Who was it who found the fifteenth-century Virgin in the little chapel here?

ROSENGARTEN—That wasn't bad; but when you hear of my new scheme, Isaac, your Virgin, in comparison to it, won't be worth more than a bottle of pickles.

KOUGELMAN—[*Irritably.*] Well, what is it, in the name of heaven—all this tomfool mystery, and those pictures under your arm?

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ROSENGARTEN—These pictures! There is a fortune in them!

KOUGELMAN—Oh! Come now, be serious! We must get a hold of the old lady's pictures, there's a real possibility there.

ROSENGARTEN—My poor chap, when you hear of my plan—and I see it all—I have it all mapped out—your hair will simply stand up on your head.

KOUGELMAN—I'll admit it won't be the first time you've made it stand up. But out with it, for God's sake, man!

ROSENGARTEN—[*Tapping the canvases.*] I've told you, it's all in these pictures.

KOUGELMAN—You're not going to try to make me think that we can do anything with that poor idiot's pictures?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Positively.*] I certainly am.

KOUGELMAN—Oh! Come now, there are limits!

ROSENGARTEN—Limits are for the limited. You also said there were limits when I concocted the scheme of the cigar-store Indian figures. We've made a bit out out of that, haven't we? Already almost three hundred thousand, isn't it?

KOUGELMAN—[*Pouring tea for himself and ROSENGARTEN.*] Yes; but I don't see any connection.

ROSENGARTEN—You will! Do you remember you told me then that the public was not the fool I took it for?

KOUGELMAN—Yes; but——

ROSENGARTEN—And you were convinced that it would be impossible to reduce the number of Indians

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in order to give value to those we might buy up? You even said that my idea was ridiculous.

KOUGELMAN—It did seem ridiculous at first.

ROSENGARTEN—Well, how long did it take me before I manipulated the Civic Improvement Society to get rid of the Indians through the Press on the grounds that they were relics of American infancy and barbarism, and a disgrace to our æsthetic spirit?

KOUGELMAN—They did disappear pretty fast, I must admit, under the lash of ridicule. Americans can't stand that.

ROSENGARTEN—Then after we had bought in several hundred of them, it didn't take long, did it, before I got the art critics singing in the Press about the Cigar-store Indians being expressive of Primitive American Art? And now there are two in the Metropolitan, one in the British Museum, and one in the Luxembourg. Of course, after that, no collection of an American millionaire is complete without at least one or more.

KOUGELMAN—[*Winking.*] But there are a few very choice examples still to be obtained in the Kougelman Galleries—at a price!

ROSENGARTEN—This time, my dear Isaac, instead of two or three hundred thousand, I see a million or more.

KOUGELMAN—A million! That's all very fine! But how? I don't understand.

ROSENGARTEN—Don't you think it is kinder to turn a fool into a genius than to make of a genius a fool?—which is what the world has always done.

KOUGELMAN—Our fool, then, is to be turned by us

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into a genius, and his pictures sold as masterpieces, I suppose.

ROSENGARTEN—Exactly!

KOUGELMAN—[*Incredulously.*] But, my dear J.R., really that's going too far. I don't think much of the public myself, but there is such a thing as public opinion.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Lighting a cigarette.*] The public has never had an opinion, and never will have one! Public opinion is merely the private opinion of one or more dominant spirits, who mould the mass, which is as clay in their hands, entirely according to their personal ambitions and interests.

KOUGELMAN—Are there no good leaders, then?

ROSENGARTEN—Why, certainly, when their private interests happen to coincide with the public welfare, we then have good leaders. Life is a battle between shepherds for control of the herd, which bleats, grazes about, is "sheared," and has its ankles nipped by the collie police. It was an astute little group of shepherds who ousted their predecessors with that meaningless trinity of words, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"!

KOUGELMAN—Your philosophy of life is obviously based on egoism.

ROSENGARTEN—My philosophy is based on biology, and the biologist knows that the public not only wants to be fooled, but needs to be fooled, demands to be fooled, for its health and happiness. A public that is no longer fooled turns with despair on its leaders, and struggles through revolution, horror and chaos to find new leaders capable of fooling it again. The people not only seek to be fooled by their government,

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but by religion, art and science. Religion has been exhausted, shown up by science. Art is tottering on its last legs, and the world has now turned to science; and when they can no longer be fooled by that they will revert in anguish and despair to religion again, to be soothed and comforted and fooled by the Mumbo-Jumbo high-priest-man.

KOUGELMAN—Well, my dear J.R., I hope you are not fooling me.

ROSENGARTEN—Isaac, the Kougelmans and the Rosengartens are shepherds!

KOUGELMAN—Hum! [*Beginning to ignite.*] But don't let's get too far away from that million! For the life of me though I can't see a million in these things. [*Picking up one of the canvases and sceptically scratching his head.*] Perhaps I'm holding it upside down!

ROSENGARTEN—That doesn't matter! It's all the better. It makes it easier to label it with new "ists" and "isms."

KOUGELMAN—Instead of Cubism and Futurism, we might call it "Upsidedownism" or "Topsy-turvyist"!

ROSENGARTEN—You're facetious, Isaac.

KOUGELMAN—Perhaps! I'm still completely dazed, at any rate.

ROSENGARTEN—Here's the whole idea; it's as simple as the Indians. We take our fool to Paris, dress him as an artist, with flowing tie, etc. He already looks like Christ. Have an exhibition of his pictures in our galleries; start up our newspaper and magazine critics; have our friend Van Rensselaer-Levineson publish a

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book about him, on the lines of his Italian Primitives, or like the one he did for us on the Indians——

KOUGELMAN—[*Reminiscently.*] Charged us too much for it, damn him!

ROSENGARTEN—Edit one of our éditions de luxe with reproductions of his pictures, and a preface by some great literary light, like Mirbeau, who would swallow bait and all to be the first to discover a new genius. Start up the Duchess of Mandelieu, whom we landed with two Indians, and who is craving for notoriety, and old Van Loon, who owns an Indian too, and is suffocated with art jargon and intellectual snobbism, and all their Ritzonian following, who are dying of chic. Have a hat, collar and corset named after our genius——

KOUGELMAN—Or suspender, button——

ROSENGARTEN—[*Ignoring interruption.*] Get the great dressmakers, Poiret for instance, to name a colour for him. Rumpelmeyer can christen a cake with his name. Of course, have his picture conspicuously refused by the Salon, and vitriolically attacked by Clews, or some other idiotic reactionary crank. Rothschild might name a horse for him, the Duchess could call a new variety of carnation after him, and we could easily have him referred to in a speech in the House of Deputies by our friend Stern, who believes himself an art connoisseur, and has his political eye on the Portfolio of Fine Arts.

KOUGELMAN—I'm beginning to think, J.R., that I'd rather have you backing a fool than even Thompson or Carter backing a pill. The picture part of it might

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be possible—I can almost see that—but what will you do with the fool?

ROSENGARTEN—What will we do with the fool? Why, he's perfect! We can do what we want with him. I can teach him the proper art jargon, and interpret his childish language symbolically. [*Half closing his eyes with prophetic gesture.*] I can see him now as a sort of a prophet of purity and simplicity, crowned with "ists" and "isms." But all that will come later. Just wait!

KOUGELMAN—How about his mother? She will never let him go.

ROSENGARTEN—What! With officers of the Young Men's Christian Association? Just leave all that to me.

KOUGELMAN—And the royalties to the mother? We didn't make much out of Rhinestone the sculptor after having launched and exploited him at enormous expense. There he is now in London, established as a genius, making a fortune out of mud-pies, with us out of it.

ROSENGARTEN—Goodness, Isaac, he's a Rhinestone, not a fool! That's the very reason I've taken a Goy this time. He'll never be able to throw us over, and as for the royalties, we can pay what we like.

KOUGELMAN—[*Warningly.*] You remember what Lincoln said about fooling the public all the time?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Hopelessly.*] After all I've said about the public, I now hear a Kougelman seriously quoting that wily old shepherd, who gathered in his herds with those melliferous words: "A government of

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the people, for the people, by the people." Leave that to sentimentalists like Drinkwater and H. G. Wells.

[*Enter MRS. BROWN. They both rise.*]

KOUGELMAN—Mrs. Brown, we have had such a charming moment in your garden; the tea and cakes were delicious.

MRS. BROWN—It has been a pleasure to me.

ROSENGARTEN—My partner has been talking to me about your husband's pictures; he evidently had amazing talent.

KOUGELMAN—Amazing!

ROSENGARTEN—[*With mesmeric intonation.*] I said talent, my dear Mrs. Brown; but we must not confuse talent with genius. Great talent like your husband had is extremely rare indeed; but genius is a divine white flame that is perceived and cherished by few. It is, alas! often extinguished by the ignorant and indifferent world which mistakes it for madness. Christ said, "One must become as a little child to enter the Kingdom of Heaven," and it is they who have the simplicity and purity of little children who are chosen to receive this sacred gift of the Almighty Master. [*He pauses. With impressive emphasis and hand uplifted.*] Your son is of those chosen.

MRS. BROWN—[*Astounded.*] But, Mr. Rosengarten, I don't understand. You bewilder me. Had I not seen how kind you are, I would think you were making fun of my unfortunate son.

ROSENGARTEN—No, my dear lady, I'm in earnest, terribly in earnest. This is one of the greatest events of my life. Let us sit down over here, for I have much to tell you. [*Places a chair for her.*]

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MRS. BROWN—[*Sinking into chair, dazed.*] You confuse me. I don't know what to think, it's all so unbelievable, impossible, after all these years of sorrow. My poor child a genius! Is that what you mean?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Reverently.*] Yes, a genius.

MRS. BROWN—But how? Not in his sad little pictures?

ROSENGARTEN—Not sad little pictures! His is marvellous art! They are the greatest modern paintings I've seen.

KOUGELMAN—[*Intensely.*] They are so symbolical, I can hardly grasp them myself.

MRS. BROWN—[*Breaking down.*] It's all too sudden. It's too much. I'm overwhelmed. [*Weeps silently.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Tenderly patting her hand.*] Great joy is sometimes even harder to bear than great sorrow. My heart is heavy with the shock of joy I have given you.

MRS. BROWN—[*Drying her eyes.*] If my husband could only have heard this. [*To ROSENGARTEN.*] You, I know, are a great art connoisseur—Mr. Kougelman has told me about you—but, even so, I haven't the strength to believe what you are telling me.

ROSENGARTEN—We will give you the strength, won't we, Isaac?

KOUGELMAN—[*Fervently.*] Yes, oh yes. Although I'm almost as overcome by it all as Mrs. Brown.

MRS. BROWN—Did you recognize genius in his pictures immediately?

ROSENGARTEN—Immediately. You must have noticed how I withdrew in meditation. I was entirely unpre-

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pared, it was so unexpected. One should be prepared by a pilgrimage for genius and beauty, not stumble in upon the shrine.

MRS. BROWN—[*Puzzled.*] But, Mr. Kougelman, you never mentioned my son while I was showing you my husband's pictures.

KOUGELMAN—[*Confounded.*] No! Well—that is to say—you see—eh—well——

ROSENGARTEN—[*Coming to his assistance.*] You see my friend has lived so much in the glorious sunsets of old masters.

KOUGELMAN—[*With relief.*] Yes, the old masters.

ROSENGARTEN—He was awakened later than I by the triumphant dawn of future art. You no doubt have heard of the Futurists, and Cubists, and Imagists?

MRS. BROWN—Oh yes, I have heard of them, but have never seen their pictures.

ROSENGARTEN—That explains, then, why you have not recognized your son's genius. If I may be allowed to say so, it's a matter of long education.

MRS. BROWN—But my husband always said there was nothing to know in art, but everything to feel.

ROSENGARTEN—That's just it! The new art is the education of feeling. Isaac, let me have that art magazine you have in your pocket. I'm sure I saw a reproduction of that famous picture of the "Nude walking downstairs backwards." [KOUGELMAN *hands him magazine.*] Thanks.

KOUGELMAN—[*While ROSENGARTEN looks through magazine.*] I remember, on seeing that picture for the first time at the Armoury Exhibition in New York, my

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emotion was so intense it almost made me weep. No old master ever had that effect on me.

ROSENGARTEN—Here it is! [*Presents magazine to MRS. BROWN.*—with that wonderful poem which was dedicated to it and caused such a stir at that time in the literary world.

MRS. BROWN—[*Looking at picture earnestly.*] Well, it must be beyond me. I've been living perhaps too long out of the world. You say this is called a "Nude walking down the Staircase backwards." But I can't see any nude or any staircase. All I can see are blurred triangles. It even makes me feel rather dizzy to look at it.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Encouragingly.*] Dizzy, that's it! It's the beginning of your education of feeling.

MRS. BROWN—Why, even in John's pictures I can see certain vague things, which look more or less like flowers and trees, and spots which might be taken for little figures.

ROSENGARTEN—Now may I read you the poem? It's so atmospheric. It's one of the most notable ones in modern literature. [*Takes magazine from MRS. BROWN and reads. ELLEN, who has been removing the tea, occasionally stops and listens to the conversation.*]

To a Nude, walking down the Staircase backwards

At last we are together!

I always knew that it would happen thus.

I shall place my hand firmly on the banister

And not be deterred in my ascent;

Seeing the Nude eternal before me.

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The nightingale is singing on the top landing;
You could not bear the song.

Although my fly paper is black with flies
It does not mean that I shall not hear the nightingale.
You are nude, believe me, and are descending the stair-
case backwards,

Because in your subliminal self
You prefer to use the fly for sunlit trout.

My fly paper is black with flies;
But I shall hear the song of nightingale
Although I have worn a white boutonnière, and heard
Parsifal.

At last we are together!
I always knew that it would happen thus.

[*He quietly closes magazine, and then with an expres-
sion of rapt admiration very slowly articulates.*]
Beautiful, ever beautiful!

KOUGELMAN—Sublime! It gives me the most phan-
tastic emotion. And to think that I did not understand
it when I first heard it some years ago.

ROSENGARTEN—Yet, it's so simple; it's static
emotion.

MRS. BROWN—[*Completely mystified.*] I'm sorry,
Mr. Rosengarten, I don't understand it; I don't under-
stand a word of it.

ROSENGARTEN—It is, I know, new to you, Mrs.
Brown. I appreciate that.

MRS. BROWN—[*Naïvely.*] I know Keats' *Ode to the
Nightingale*. My husband loved it. I often read it
to him while he painted. We both loved it. But this
poem——

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ROSENGARTEN—Of course Keats was a very great poet, one of the greatest; but may I dare to say that there is as great a gulf between Keats' nightingale and this nightingale as exists between the great talent of your husband and the genius of your son?

MRS. BROWN—It's all so strange; it's like a dream.

ROSENGARTEN—Your husband and Keats were great masters of the past; but your son and the author of this poem are supreme masters of the present and future. John belongs to the world, he must no longer remain hidden in this little village.

MRS. BROWN—[*Helplessly.*] But what am I to do? We live here—er—what can I do?

ROSENGARTEN—I'll tell you. You must put your son in our care. We will take him to Paris.

MRS. BROWN—[*Alarmed.*] To Paris!

KOUGELMAN—[*Soothingly.*] But not immediately, Mrs. Brown; later; he can come later.

MRS. BROWN—But I can't let my poor little John go out into the cruel world like that.

ROSENGARTEN—[*With animation.*] You must no longer think of him as your poor little John. He is your great John; your glorious John; your world-famous John.

MRS. BROWN—[*In tears.*] Oh no! he can't leave his poor mother and old Ellen; we'll never be able to let him go.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Dramatically.*] How many millions of mothers have given up their sons in these last cruel years? Will you refuse now to give up yours for battlefields of art and glory? You won't, I know.

MRS. BROWN—[*Piteously.*] No, no, I dare not refuse, I suppose. It seems like a miracle.

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ROSENGARTEN—[*Histrionically.*] It is a miracle, a modern miracle. [JOHN'S *flute is heard from studio.*]

KOUGELMAN—I've always loved the flute. Is that your son?

MRS. BROWN—Yes; his father used to play it.

ROSENGARTEN—It's so pastoral, it gives one the fields, the flowers, the shepherd and his flock. Shall we go in and talk it all over with the Master?

MRS. BROWN—The Master! No one has ever called him that except old Ellen.

ROSENGARTEN—Old Ellen calls him Master John, but now it is John the Master. [*They walk towards the studio in silence, and enter. KOUGELMAN suddenly stops on threshold.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Aside.*] By Jove! I'll bet the chauffeur has gone to get a drink and left our Virgin in the car. [*He hastily disappears out of gate, but reappears immediately, with a fine example of a half life-size statue of a Renaissance Virgin in his arms. The figure is in fair condition, worm-eaten in places, with the plaster showing through the gold.*] You don't often find a Virgin of such value in these days! The old priest looked as if he knew more about twentieth-century virgins than Renaissance ones. [*He tries to stand Virgin on her base.*] When you're touched up a bit, my lady, and standing on your pedestal in the Kougelman chapel, you'll have artistic New York on their knees before you, instead of a handful of peasants in a village church. Think of getting her for five hundred francs, and the old codger took me for a fool at that. [*As pedestal is broken, he finds it easier to place her on her head against the wall.* There! you're

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safer like that, on your head. We're all upside down anyhow. [*Going towards studio.*] J.R. is a wizard all right. If his scheme goes through, our young fool should bring us in more than a hundred old virgins. [*Enters studio.*]

ELLEN—[*Appears at cottage door with watering-pot, and starts to water flower-beds. It is dusk.*] Mother of Moses! What would the master be a-thinkin' of all these high-jinks? Is it asleep I be, or is it awake? A jenius, the gintleman called my poor lamb, whatever that may be, and showed the missus a picture what made her feel dizzy-like. Sure, and it's meself that's feelin' dizzy now. And says he, not crackin' a smile on his face, "My fly paper is black with flies," says he; and the missus, with tears a-tricklin' down her cheeks, answers, "I've not the strength to believe it," says she. And it's cracked and crazy we all be ivver since them American officers came in a-askin' for a coop of tea, and stood us all upside down on our heads. [*She looks about, and on seeing the Virgin on her head against the wall utters a shriek and falls to her knees.*] Almighty God and the holy Saints, presarve us! It's the Holy Virgin Hersilf I've been a-prayin' to these last thirty years a-standin' on Her head. [*Covers her face with her hands, while looking in the opposite direction.*] Surely 'tis Her I seen a-standin' on Her head. But I don't believe it, for me poor brain is so befuzzled I can't see straight. [*Peeps through her fingers.*] Oh, Lord of Mercy! 'Tis Her! 'Tis Her! I don't believe it, but 'tis Her! [*Wails and moans.*]

MRS. BROWN—[*Appearing in doorway of studio, followed by ROSENGARTEN, KUGELMAN and JOHN. Runs*

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over to ELLEN.] What is it, my poor Ellen? What's the matter? What's the matter?

ELLEN—Oh, mum, 'tis the Blessed Virgin Hersilf over there a-standin' on Her head! Oh! Oh! [*Moaning.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Angrily to KOUGELMAN, under his breath.*] You marplot! You've botched it all. [*Rushing forward.*] It's all right, Ellen, don't be frightened. It's all right. We brought the Virgin here. You see, Mrs. Brown, we're taking the statue to New York to the Metropolitan Museum.

MRS. BROWN—[*Relieved.*] Oh, that's it! I hate to have it go; but if it's for a museum——

ROSENGARTEN—It's fifteenth-century—er—er—Renaissance; beautiful example, you know. Oughtn't to be hidden away here. That's the reason we're taking her to Paris. You see, the students would never see her here.

ELLEN—[*Getting up from her knees.*] Oh! it's frightened I've been. [*With hand on her heart.*] Me heart's a-thumpin' and thumpin'——

MRS. BROWN—It's all right, Ellen; these gentlemen are taking the statue to a great museum.

ROSENGARTEN—Yes. Next week, Ellen, you'll have a brand-new Virgin, all white and blue and gold, with stars on her head.

ELLEN—Ah, mercy me! I was that scared. For the last thirty years I've been a-prayin' to Our Lady. [*To ROSENGARTEN.*] In your countree, sir, that must mean nothin', for me sister Bridget, what lives in New York, says everything changes continual there, and that it would even make 'em all uncomfortable and nervous-like

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to see a house a-standin' too long in the same place.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Smiling.*] There's a lot in what you say, Ellen.

KOUGELMAN—It's good for the builders and architects anyhow.

ROSENGARTEN—I suppose we had better be leaving, Mrs. Brown.

KOUGELMAN—[*Putting on gloves.*] I'll put the statue back in the car. [*Goes out, carrying Virgin.*]

ROSENGARTEN—My dear John, everything is now decided, and you are to come to us in Paris later. You do want to come, don't you?

JOHN—[*Enthusiastically.*] Oh yes. I like you so much.

ROSENGARTEN—Well, I think I'll take those pictures with me; the few I put aside in the studio.

JOHN—[*Pleased.*] I am so glad you like them. No one has ever asked me for one before. I'll get them for you. [*Goes into studio. KOUGELMAN re-enters from highway.*]

ROSENGARTEN—Mrs. Brown, I'll write you from Paris, and we'll make all the detailed arrangements about John's coming later. Now I'll say good-bye, and thank you for a wonderful afternoon.

MRS. BROWN—Good-bye. I can find no words to express my feelings.

KOUGELMAN—[*Shaking hands.*] So pleased to have met you, Mrs. Brown. Excuse my glove.

MRS. BROWN—[*Sadly.*] Ah! Mr. Kougelman, you and Mr. Rosengarten have revealed my son to me, only to take him away.

ROSENGARTEN—To give him to the world. [*Seeing*

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JOHN *returning with pictures under each arm.*] Oh! thank you, my dear John. You'll see them all later in Paris in beautiful gold frames. [*Takes pictures from him.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*To JOHN.*] We'll meet in Paris soon.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Aside to ELLEN.*] Ellen, the scones were delicious. [*Slipping fifty francs into her hand.*]

ELLEN—Thank you, sorr.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Aloud to ELLEN.*] You'll have your brand-new Virgin next week.

ELLEN—[*With a quizzical smile.*] I suppose 'tis the way of the world, sorr, to have old countrees a-wantin' new virgins, and new countrees a-wantin' old virgins. [*General laughter.*]

ROSENGARTEN—Mrs. Brown, your Ellen is a real philosopher. Good-bye. [ROSENGARTEN and KOUGELMAN bow low and withdraw. Motor is heard leaving behind wall. JOHN stands at open gate waving.]

ELLEN—[*Looking at the fifty francs.*] The Americans is a weird lot, but ginerous they are. Fifty francs for a-servin' a coop of tea! [*Enters house.*]

JOHN—Mother dear, that kind gentleman told me that I was a genius. What is a genius? Is it better to be a genius than to be a poor fool?

MRS. BROWN—God knows, my dear child, God knows! [*Runs into house, covering her eyes with her handkerchief.*]

JOHN—I wonder why mother seems so sad. I have had such a happy day. [*Dreamily wanders to a chair, takes flute from pocket and begins to play.*]

CURTAIN

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ACT II

Paris: five months later in the spacious private show-room of KOUGELMAN & Co.

The walls are draped from ceiling to floor with plum-coloured velvet.

On rear wall are hung two large paintings in massive gold frames, one by Van Dyck and the other by Rubens. To the left stands an easel, on which is a picture by Ingres. Behind it, stacked against the wall, are a dozen or more unframed canvases of various sizes. In front of easel is a Louis Fifteenth tapestry sofa of the epoch. Three arm-chairs belonging to the same set as the sofa are grouped towards centre of room, in front of a long Louis Sixteenth desk with beautifully chiselled bronze mountings. On desk are books, latest art publications, papers, telephone, etc.; a large old Sèvres ink-pot, with upstanding green quill pen of exaggerated length; two small bronze statues on marble pedestals, one by Jean de Bologna, the other attributed by Levison to Peter Visher; and a large photograph of MERVYN, by Alfred Stieglitz, in a Cordovan leather frame. Behind the desk, which is placed parallel to right wall, is a very choice example of a Louis Sixteenth desk-chair.

To the right is a door leading into adjoining room. In rear, left, is a double door opening into the KOUGELMAN ART GALLERIES.

A pair of three-quarter size statues of wooden Indian chieftains in feather head-dresses and full

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war regalia, each holding a tomahawk in one hand, and a large bunch of cigars in the other, stand upon massive stone pedestals against rear wall. The pedestals are elaborately decorated by KOU-GELMAN's experts with Indian designs. Except for a short skirt from waist to knee, resembling a kilt, these statues are nude, and crudely coloured with vivid paint which has been softened and toned down by KOU-GELMAN & Co.

They have obviously been cut out of wood and painted by the same honest wood-choppers who turn out galloping steeds for merry-go-rounds and gilded figures for circus vans.

About twenty years ago similar Indian figures were to be seen in front of every cigar store in America as tobacco trade signs, but they finally began to disappear when the little cigar shop was put out of business by the Tobacco Trust. The remaining ones were put to flight by newspaper attacks inspired by KOU-GELMAN & Co., and then bought up by them as junk, to be later sold as American "Primitives."

Between the Indians is a rare and beautiful Gothic chest of exquisite handicraft.

On either side of entrance to the gallery are two delicately fluted seventeenth-century Spanish altar columns mounted on modern bases, with polychrome Corinthian tops, on which are placed respectively a Rodin head and a small Greek torso. To the left of them, in the corner, stands a Renaissance marble pedestal, above which is hung a beautiful Flemish tapestry.

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The floor is covered with a fine old Turkish rug. In a cabinet behind the desk are rare Chinese porcelains, jades and crystals.

As curtain rises KOUGELMAN is discovered seated at desk smoking a large cigar, in conversation with ROSENGARTEN, who is lounging opposite in one of the tapestry arm-chairs smoking a cigarette.

KOUGELMAN, probably out of respect for his "old masters," is, with his pearl-grey spats, highly varnished Hellstern shoes, cut-away coat, fancy waistcoat, striped trousers, bejewelled hands, pomaded hair, perfumed monogrammed violet silk handkerchief peeping from out his sleeve, Cartier watch-chain and sleeve-links, and enormous Tecla pearl scarf-pin stuck through the very latest Charvet tie, simply—"gotten up to beat the band."

ROSENGARTEN, as usual, is dressed like a gentleman.

ROSENGARTEN—Isaac, you must be careful about not calling him John.

KOUGELMAN—It does slip out, I suppose; but as we've been talking, thinking and dreaming of nothing but John for the last month, it's difficult to suddenly call him Mervyn.

ROSENGARTEN—It's lucky I thought in time of changing the name of our genius. We never could have done anything with John Brown. It smacks of book-keeping and dry goods, and, besides, *the* John Brown "lies a-mouldering in the grave," and the other was a rather late Victorian, like you, Isaac, at times.

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KOUGELMAN—Hum! At any rate the name Mervyn isn't bad. How did you think of it?

ROSENGARTEN—Oh, it's an old Welsh name. There's myth and mystery in it. It's good to operate with. I also thought of the name Glamorgan. It's too heavy, though; he couldn't carry it.

KOUGELMAN—The titles for his pictures you must have fished straight out of the mad-house.

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, the mad-house of humanity. People no longer buy pictures or anything else now. They buy names and labels. [*Looking at magazine.*] Here are clever names for Futurist painters, for instance: "Piccasso" and "Piccabia." The first part, "pic," enters the brain of the good bourgeois like a needle, and the "casso" or "cabia" explode afterwards like a bomb in his pocket-book. "Matisse" isn't a bad name either; it has the sibilant, mesmeric hiss of a serpent. You had luck with Kougelman; there's good cheer in it; it gurgles like a brook in springtime.

KOUGELMAN—Goodness, J.R., we have so much to arrange, and it's you who are gurgling. [*Knock at door.*] Come in! [*Two porters appear carrying Virgin of first act. The missing hand has been replaced by a new one, with the old gold patine and worm-eaten wood cleverly imitated.*] Ah! at last, there she is. On the pedestal over there, please. [*Exeunt porters, after placing Virgin on pedestal.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Without turning around.*] Don't put her on her head again!

KOUGELMAN—[*Examining statue minutely.*] He's done it beautifully. He's a clever little sculptor. I defy anyone to know that the hand has been added on.

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Come and look at it; the worm-holes are perfectly beautiful. I'll bet even Levineson couldn't detect them.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Rising from chair.*] Well, I must have a look at those *perfectly beautiful* worm-holes. [*Glancing at statue.*] Yes, not bad.

KOUGELMAN—[*Apprehensively.*] I'm getting awfully nervous about John—Mervyn, I mean. Do you think we will surely be ably to carry it through? He's been with us now two weeks, and in spite of your lessons I don't see much difference.

ROSENGARTEN—Now, don't get worried; isn't everything going as I planned? Isn't all Paris talking of the Mervyn Exhibition? They are flocking to our galleries in thousands, and it hasn't been going a week.

KOUGELMAN—[*Reassured.*] Over a thousand came yesterday.

ROSENGARTEN—Well, then; and look at the Press notices; there are columns already. Listen to this—and not by one of *our* critics either. [*Reading from morning paper which he picks up from desk.*] “Mervyn the Master of Subjectivity. Let all those who are entombed in the charnel-house of materialism, and are seeking in vain to escape from the bondage of self, go for comfort and hope to the Kougelman Galleries, and bathe their world-worn spirits in the liquid, limpid sunlight of Mervyn's subliminal art.” And it goes on like that for almost two more columns, my dear fellow.

KOUGELMAN—[*With upturned eyes and shaking his head.*] It passeth understanding.

ROSENGARTEN—Here's another! “Mother Nature presents to Mervyn no wrinkled face nor tottering form, but through him constantly renews the bloom of

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her youth. His pictures are testaments of divine truth, and by his amazing processes of simplification and elimination express the almost superhuman economy of an absolute mind in art." Do you hear that? "An absolute mind"!

KOUGELMAN—It's enough to make us lose our own.

ROSENGARTEN—My dear friend, I would have lost mine years ago if I hadn't become a philosophical biologist.

KOUGELMAN—John—oh, damn!—Mervyn certainly looks the part in the clothes we bought him, but God knows what's going to happen when he meets people. I'm almost terrified at the thought. We can't keep him hidden all the time. I still don't see how you're going to carry that part of it off. And what's to prevent everyone from seeing him as a fool?

ROSENGARTEN—Vanity.

KOUGELMAN—Vanity! But what's that got to do with it?

ROSENGARTEN—Everything! *Vanitas Vanitatum!* And our poor fool on a hook and line of dribbling nonsense will be gulped up by the blind vanity of those who see the possibility of exploiting themselves in having discovered a genius.

KOUGELMAN—That's all well enough for the Duchess and her acolytes, who are craving notoriety, and for small groups of self-exploiting critics and literary cranks; but they're only a handful.

ROSENGARTEN—The others who base their superiority on their immediate appreciation of the very latest thing in art and literature will blindly follow their leaders, and be aped in their turn by the camp-followers,

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who dare not even open their eyes for fear of being accused of ignorance and stupidity. There you have the three groups behind art to-day.

KOUGELMAN—You have forgotten us.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Picks up book and turns over pages.*] Oh no, I never do that! But we're not behind art, Isaac, we're in front of it.

KOUGELMAN—[*A knock at the door.*] Come in! [MOSES STEIN *enters.*] Well, Stein, is everything going on all right?

STEIN—Splendidly, Mr. Kougelman! The galleries are packed. I just came in to tell you that a great many important people are there. The Duchess of Mandelieu came in a few minutes ago, with a number of friends. She told me to say that she would be back later with Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson. Old McBride of the *London Times* is nosing about, making notes.

KOUGELMAN—I'm suspicious of him.

ROSENGARTEN—Feel your way into his article. What was the Duchess saying?

STEIN—She was tremendously excited, and was telling everyone how she had discovered Mr. Mervyn.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Without looking up from book.*] I started her on that voyage of discovery a few days ago in our last conversation. I'm delighted to hear she has arrived safely in port.

KOUGELMAN—Oh, Stein! Please let me know the instant Mr. Ezra P. Packer comes. I've just heard from the Ritz that he arrived from New York, with his family, yesterday.

ROSENGARTEN—Our Virgin over there has been wait-

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ing for Mr. Ezra P. Packer, the New York multi-millionaire, for over four centuries.

KOUGELMAN—By the way, I believe Mr. Lorenzo Gonzalez of Buenos Ayres is also in Paris. I don't know if his photograph is in our album of millionaires. If it isn't, procure one, for if he comes in you must spot him immediately.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Still perusing book.*] It's time for South America to be encouraged.

STEIN—I'll look it up; but I'd better go back before old McBride escapes. [*Turns to go.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Suddenly.*] Ah, here it is! [*Looking up from book.*] One minute, Stein; listen to this attentively, please. [*Reading aloud.*] "When the absolute ruler of worlds saw the"—oh, well, that's—no—here—[*Reading slowly and distinctly.*] "Man being the last and most perfect, He not only gave to him the five organs of sense—sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing—but also a sixth (called Mamas), by which he can commune with God, and unlock the mysteries of nature. The sixth sense is the dual force generated by the attuned union of the two sexes within each individual, which is admitted by all Hindoo philosophers. The Sastrae not only promises"—oh! but that's of no importance. [*Closes book with snap.*] Well, did you get the gist of that?

STEIN—I gather that there is a sixth sense, called "Mamas," in the Hindoo religion, but I didn't quite get the dual sex part of it.

KOUGELMAN—[*To himself.*] I didn't get any of it.

ROSENGARTEN—We'll leave the dual sex to the Hindoos for the moment, and begin with Mamas.

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KOUGELMAN—[*Aside.*] He'd better leave it all to 'em, I think.

STEIN—I see.

ROSENGARTEN—It's about time for "ists" and "isms" to attach themselves to Mervyn's name; you understand?

STEIN—Yes, Mr. Rosengarten—er—you mean—er—?

ROSENGARTEN—This afternoon you might let the Hindoo word Mamas, meaning sixth sense, flutter about for a few minutes through the galleries, and be sure to see that the Duchess of Mandelieu catches it between her exquisite fingers before she comes in here.

STEIN—I understand. You want the word Mamas, Mamasist, Mamasism, meaning the sixth sense, connected—er—associated with Mr. Mervyn's art?

ROSENGARTEN—Quite so.

STEIN—And you would like the Duchess of Mandelieu to think that the idea originated with her?

ROSENGARTEN—That's it. The Duchess has a genius for appropriating and broadcasting the ideas of others.

STEIN—[*Laughing.*] No one could better elucidate Mr. Mervyn's art.

ROSENGARTEN—But remember, Stein, it's not *Mr.* Mervyn, simply Mervyn. After a certain altitude the Mister drops off. One doesn't say *Mr.* Raphael; it's Raphael. It would be even absurd to call the genius of Pears' Soap *Mr.* Pears. Immortals are never gentlemen.

STEIN—I have it. I'd better get back to Mervyn and—eh—Mamas. [*Exit.*]

ROSENGARTEN—He's a good man—Stein; he adds

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the proper literary touch to the galleries, and relieves them of the commercial atmosphere. The spectacles I put on him the other day are a great success with his white hair. They give him an owl-like professorial look.

KOUGELMAN—He is certainly wonderful at netting gilded high-brows.

ROSENGARTEN—His conversation and general make-up give them reassurance and a feeling of security. He's quick, too; he caught that Mamas psychology immediately.

KOUGELMAN—How is Mamas written, anyhow? It sounds to me like Ma-ma. We must be careful; it seems to me simply childish.

ROSENGARTEN—On the contrary, it is childishly simple.

KOUGELMAN—There you are again, inverting everything; you're impossible!

ROSENGARTEN—Until I become—possible. No, I'm delighted with the word Mamas; it's splendid. It suggests all that Yogi vogue and Hindoo business. Our ladies of fashion to-day are either stood on their heads against the wall by a pet Yogi, or turned upside down by a pet Bolshevik.

KOUGELMAN—I suppose fashion must have its pets.

ROSENGARTEN—Personally, were I a lady of fashion and passion, I would prefer a Cicisbeo, the pet of the past, to a Bolshevik, Yogi, or even Futurist or Dadaist.

STEIN—[*Knocks, opens door, and thrusts in head.*] Old McBride has just left. I made him feel like a Mervyn discoverer. He flew out in full feather. He'll

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now write a great article. Some American newspaper men have come in.

ROSENGARTEN—Oh! they will swallow anything. Mervynize them, Mervynize them. [STEIN *nods and disappears.*]

ROSENGARTEN—I now see New York looming up in the distance. We can make a cult over there—a religion—the return to simplicity, and all that kind of thing. Look at Maeterlinck, for instance, our modern Cagliostro of letters. His steamer was met by blue-bird aeroplanes. He was escorted to his hotel by blue-bird policemen. He was given blue-bird balls, and even the Mayor of New York became a blue bird himself, and gave him the freedom of the city. That could only happen in America. Anything can be done with Americans. Science and machinery have turned them into fanatics, sentimentalists and ego-maniacs, and they are utterly devoid of both a sense of proportion and a sense of humour.

KOUGELMAN—[*With patriotic surprise.*] Americans have no sense of humour? But that's what we pride ourselves on.

ROSENGARTEN—Which shows that we have none. People always pride themselves on what they haven't. The English have humour, the French wit, and the Americans merely a sense of farce.

KOUGELMAN—Let us hope they won't think Mervyn a farce.

ROSENGARTEN—In art, Europe thinks for America, and you and I, dear partner, think for Europe. [*Telephone rings.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Answering telephone.*] Hullo! Oh,

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VAN RENSSELAER-LEVINESON! No, the Duchess hasn't come yet. Your book—yes, good—I understand—all right, we'll be here. Good-bye. [*Hanging up telephone irritably.*] I can't stand Levineson.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Mischievously.*] Don't forget the "Van Rensselaer."

KOUGELMAN—Van Rensselaer! My God! And I remember him years ago as little Sammy Levineson, hawking plaster Venuses on Broadway. And here he is now, posing as a sort of Petronius, with the most conspicuous society woman in Europe and America as his mistress—the Duchess of Mandelieu, with all the Blumentberg millions behind her.

ROSENGARTEN—That's a fair bargain in "chic." She gives him social prestige, and he gives her literary and artistic glamour.

KOUGELMAN—Artistic glamour, and a baby into the bargain. And to think that Sammy Levineson's son will be the future Duke of Mandelieu! Prince of Auri-beau, and Marquis of Pergomas! Everyone knows that the old Duke was completely senile when she bought him with her American dollars.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Indifferently.*] It's one of the greatest names in the world; she didn't pay too much for it.

KOUGELMAN—Perhaps not; but she pays too much for Levineson, who has as much artistic sentiment as a fish.

ROSENGARTEN—You may dislike him, but you can't despise a man who is recognized as the greatest art critic of to-day. No; Levineson not only has social genius, and knows when, where and how to yawn with

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strategic insolence, but is a past-master in manipulating art jargon; and like us and others, who rise above the scum of mediocrity, understands the weaknesses of humanity and knows how to play on them.

KOUGELMAN—He's so damned inhuman, and such an arrant snob. He wouldn't dream of speaking to anyone less than a countess.

ROSENGARTEN—We're all snobs after our fashion, and rightly so. Snobbism is merely a form of self-preservation.

KOUGELMAN—Nonse! I loathe snobs! They're always despicable.

ROSENGARTEN—No; a snob in a way is even an idealist, as he tries for what he at least thinks is the top. It's not always social life, by any means; it may be politics, science, or anything else. Our Mervyn venture in fact is entirely based on snobbism in art, and that's why we need Van Rensselaer-Levineson and the Duchess, as they are formidable snobs in both art and society. [*A knock at the door. STEIN bows VAN RENSSELAER-LEVINESON into the room.*]

LEVINESON—Good afternoon, J.R. [*Indifferently.*] Ah! Kougelman. [*To ROSENGARTEN.*] Your galleries are so crowded, I could hardly make my way through into the—er—Sanctum Sanctorum. Has the Duchess of Mandelieu telephoned? [*Yawns.*]

KOUGELMAN—No—er—not yet.

LEVINESON—[*Ignoring KOUGELMAN.*] I gave her a rendezvous here at about four. We were all dining last night with the Grand Duchess Kira. She hasn't been to the Exhibition yet; but the Prince of Fiorentina was most enthusiastic. You've met him, of course, J.R.?

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KOUGELMAN—[*Assertively.*] I've met him too——

LEVINESON—[*Witheringly.*] No doubt you've spoken to him in the galleries. He's so democratic, you know. [*Yawns again.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Testily.*] He was democratic enough to buy one of our Indians.

ROSENGARTEN—It must be so odd to meet a real democrat; I've never met one.

LEVINESON—Paradoxing as usual, my dear J.R. [*Screwing in monocle and looking about room.*] Ah! a new Virgin!

KOUGELMAN—Yes—lovely, isn't she?

LEVINESON—Not bad—early Cinque Cento, Sienese School. Possibly by a pupil of Della Quercia. [*He continues to examine statue.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Quickly seizing opportunity.*] Why not by Della Quercia himself?

LEVINESON—[*Bringing out his microscope. Drawing.*] Well, it's possible, it's possible, but improbable. Let me see, the movement of the hand is certainly exquisite—the almond finger-nails—yes, yes. If I examined it *more carefully*—who knows, who knows?

KOUGELMAN—[*With a malicious wink to ROSENGARTEN.*] We were especially admiring the hand before you came in; weren't we, J.R.?

ROSENGARTEN—Yes; but I am glad to see that Van Rensselaer-Levineson admires it so genuinely.

KOUGELMAN—[*Significantly.*] If we were told by a great authority that it were a genuine Della Quercia, we would be willing to give him, say, twenty per cent. on the sale.

LEVINESON—[*Casually.*] If a great authority ex-

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amined it *more carefully*, and found it to be a Della Quercia, he would ask at least thirty per cent. for the use of his name.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Insinuatingly.*] As Van Rensselaer-Levineson is the supreme authority, he might examine it—er—*more carefully*.

LEVINESON—[*After a minute examination with microscope.*] Well, it's unquestionably a genuine Jacopo Della Quercia.

KOUGELMAN—[*Presses electric bell on desk with a gesture of finality.*] Good! I thought it was a Quercia, but now I know it. [*Aside.*] Thirty per cent., damn him!

ROSENGARTEN—[*To LEVINESON.*] And your book on Mervyn?

LEVINESON—I'm sending the proofs to-night.

ROSENGARTEN—I've a suggestion to make. [LEVINESON and ROSENGARTEN *converse together*. STEIN *enters in answer to bell.*]

KOUGELMAN—Stein, please have the name "Della Quercia" inscribed on a plaque, and place it on the Virgin's pedestal. I would like it immediately.

STEIN—On a gold card-board plaque, I suppose?

KOUGELMAN—Right, but order a brass one to-day. [STEIN *nods. Exit.*]

LEVINESON—[*To ROSENGARTEN.*] Mamas? Hindoo mythology—sixth sense—yes—not bad. In my book I refer to the Negroid Period, and introduce the word "Moyo," meaning spirit, which is so expressive of our genius's esoteric sense of simplification and elimination.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Exchanging a look with KOUGELMAN.*] And his ritualistic conservatism, transmissible

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through his eclectic perception of nature—— A cigarette? [*Offers his case.*]

LEVINESON—[*Adjusts his monocle, yawns and impassively takes cigarette.*] Thanks.

ROSENGARTEN—It was the Duchess of Mandelieu who suggested that Mervyn's canvases aroused in one the sixth sense, or Mamas; and we were all so impressed with the idea, that we have been circulating it about.

LEVINESON—[*With super-Ritzonian insolence.*] Ah!

ROSENGARTEN—The Duchess has such rare perception; her erudition is amazing!

LEVINESON—She probably heard *me* refer to Mamas at various times. I can easily introduce it into my book.

VAN LOON—[*Knocks, opens door, and peeps in.*] May I come in?

LEVINESON—[*Aside.*] That etherizing old fool's back again.

KOUGELMAN—Come in! Mr. Van Loon, it's always an honour to receive you.

VAN LOON—[*Overflowing with enthusiasm.*] Oh, it's wonderful! I'm still completely dazed. My dear Van Rensselaer, I've never seen such paintings!

ROSENGARTEN—None of us have, Mr. Van Loon.

VAN LOON—It's exotic! Simply ecstatic! And to think I wasn't here for the opening, instead of wasting my time down there in the Château. Why didn't you and the Duchess turn up, Van Rensselaer? My sister was expecting you.

LEVINESON—We were sorry to disappoint the Marquise but my friend King Albert wanted my advice about a Gothic statue.

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VAN LOON—King Albert! Of course! Even kings hang on Van Rensselaer's words. The Duchess is out there now in the gallery with the Packers. They are dreadful people, you know, but so rich, that nobody cares. The Duchess is too wonderful! She is explaining to the poor Packers about the sixth sense in Mervyn's pictures. What a marvellous idea!—she calls it Mamas. I felt it too. [*Looking from one to the other.*] I suppose we all feel it. [*Door is suddenly thrown open by STEIN. Enter the DUCHESS OF MANDÉLIEU, with MR., MRS. and MISS PACKER. They are all four covered with war decorations.*] Oh, Duchess, here you are. I was just quoting you about Mamas!

DUCHESS—Mr. Rosengarten, I've brought Mr. and Mrs. Packer, and Miss Packer. [*ROSENGARTEN and KUGELMAN bow ceremoniously.*] Good afternoon, Mr. Kougelman. [*Effervescing with enthusiasm.*] Why, there's never been such an Exhibition! The papers are going crazy about it. It's marvellous! It's too wonderful, Van Rensselaer!—but you're never enthusiastic.

LEVINESON—My enthusiasm is in my Mervyn book.

DUCHESS—You know, Mrs. Packer, Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson's wonderful book on Mervyn's art will appear in a few days. Oh! but I forgot. Van Rensselaer, you don't know Mr. and Mrs. Packer and their charming daughter. Think of not knowing Mr. and Mrs. Packer, who have recently joined the ranks of our most famous collectors! Haven't you, Mr. Packer?

PACKER—[*With self-conscious modesty.*] I've been told that I have some good things in my collection.

DUCHESS—[*Sparkling with animation.*] How mod-

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est! Now, isn't he modest? All great men are modest, you know.

LEVINESON—I haven't yet had the pleasure of seeing your collection, Mr. Packer, but I know of it, of course. Your Greco is the finest one outside the Prado.

DUCHESS—And Miss Packer, you know, Mr. Rosengarten, has amazing talent. She's a sculptress. Her heads are wonderful—simply wonderful! She's going to be our greatest American sculptress. Aren't you, Miss Packer?

MISS PACKER—Oh, Duchess, you embarrass me! But I would love to do your head some day.

MRS. PACKER—[*With strong nasal twang.*] My daughter really has great talent, if she would only keep at it. Mr. Packer and I just love art.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Suavely.*] I can see you do, Mrs. Packer.

KOUGELMAN—We all worship before the same shrine.

VAN LOON—Art is my religion.

DUCHESS—[*Picking up édition de luxe of MERVYN, edited by KOUGELMAN & Co., in which there is a frontispiece photograph of MERVYN.*] Oh! there's your *édition de luxe* of Mervyn. What a beautiful photograph of him! Look at the atma-vidia in those eyes; and that sensitive mouth. What intellect in that sad smile. [*Handing book to VAN LOON.*] See, Normie, what a marvellous head!

VAN LOON—[*Taking book, with fervour.*] Beautiful! Inspiring!

DUCHESS—You see, it's a new era. The war's changed everything. Men are no longer the same.

VAN LOON—[*Sententiously.*] Humanity has at last

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come into its own. The reign of altruism has begun.

DUCHESS—Yes, we're ascending. There's an awakening on all sides—everywhere; and Mervyn is expressing this evolution—this new-world spirit—in his art.

MISS PACKER—[*Preciously.*] Art is always prophetic.

DUCHESS—And to think *I* discovered such a genius.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Chivalrously.*] Duchess, may I be allowed to say it's not surprising?

VAN LOON—[*Handing book on to others.* *To* DUCHESS:] Now, Gloria, do explain to us about Mamas; it's such an amazing idea.

DUCHESS—The word just came, for when I first saw his pictures I had an entirely new sensation, an awakening of a new sense as it were, and of course, knowing the Hindoo word Mamas—you all know the word Mamas—meaning the sixth sense, the idea flashed through my brain that it was Mamas I was feeling for the first time.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Encouragingly.*] It's a kind of mental glow, isn't it, Duchess?

DUCHESS—That's it; I always feel it here on the top of my head.

VAN LOON—How strange! I always feel it just over my eyebrows. [*Touches forehead.*]

DUCHESS—[*With veiled irony.*] You, of course, know the word Mamas, Mr. Packer, don't you?

PACKER—Well—eh—to tell you the truth—eh—I—eh—

MRS. PACKER—[*Hastily coming to his assistance.*] I don't think Mr. Packer has had time to study much

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Hindoo philosophy, but my daughter and I are well acquainted with the word.

MISS PACKER—I felt “Mamas” in the same place the Duchess did. [*Raising hand above hat.*]

VAN LOON—[*To ROSENGARTEN, but intended for DUCHESS to hear.*] The Duchess is certainly the most astounding woman of this epoch.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Same play.*] Or of any other, Mr. Van Loon.

DUCHESS—[*Who has suddenly caught sight of Virgin, edges nearer to LEVINESON. Under her breath.*] The Virgin’s new, isn’t it?

LEVINESON—[*Aside to DUCHESS.*] Yes; by Della Quercia; fifteenth-century, Sienese school. Beautiful.

DUCHESS—[*Aside to LEVINESON.*] I thought so, but wasn’t sure. [*Walking with assurance towards Virgin. Aloud.*] What a beautiful Cinque Cento Virgin! She’s certainly one of the finest Della Quercias I’ve ever seen.

KOUGELMAN—Duchess, I’m completely dazzled by your erudition.

PACKER—[*Aside to daughter, anxiously.*] Patsy, for God’s sake, who is Della—eh—thingumagig?

MISS PACKER—[*Under her breath to father.*] A celebrated Italian sculptor of the fifteenth century.

MRS. PACKER—I’ve always just adored Della Quiza. His Virgins are just too sweet.

PACKER—Yes; it’s a very fine example. [*Walking towards Virgin, affecting air of connoisseur.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Seeing possibility of sale.*] And in beautiful state of preservation, Mr. Packer. [*Making sweeping gestures, with thumb extended, as if model-*
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ling in the air.] You see the line of the drapery——
[*Telephone rings; he hastily makes signs to ROSEN-
GARTEN to answer, and continues in earnest conver-
sation.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Unhooking telephone.*] Hullo!
Hullo! Yes, the Duchess of Mandelieu is here. Her
maid?—a moment, please. [To DUCHESS.] Duchess,
your maid would like to speak to you.

VAN LOON—[*Parading his intimacy.*] Oh, I know
what that is, Gloria; it's "Pasht, who has green beryls
for his eyes."

DUCHESS—[*Hastening to telephone.*] Oh, my be-
loved cat! You know, Mrs. Packer, I can't stand
being separated from my mystical sphinx for more
than an hour or two without having my maid telephone
me how he is. [Puts receiver to ear.] Allo! oui, oui,
bien! très bien! Now be careful, Thompson; don't let
Pasht get in a draught. [Hooks up telephone.]

VAN LOON—[*With earnest appreciation.*] Extraor-
dinary woman, Thompson!

MISS PACKER—There's nothing like an English maid.

DUCHESS—[*Laughing.*] Oh, but she's French!

MISS PACKER—[*With great surprise.*] French?

VAN LOON—The Duchess always calls her maids
Thompson, no matter what their nationality. It's too
amusing—after Loyal Painless Thompson, the pill per-
son, you know.

DUCHESS—But, of course, Normie, she is loyal, pain-
less and sugar-coated, and then the name Thompson—
Thompson means maid, just as to me the name Perkins
means butler. I've always called my butlers Perkins.
It was so dull of Shakespeare to say, "What's in a

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name?" Why, everything's in a name! Isn't it, Van Rensselaer?

LEVINESON—[*Visibly annoyed.*] That depends slightly on the name.

DUCHESS—I'm sure, for instance, if Landru had been called either Perkins or Thompson, he never would have butchered his wives. [*General laughter.*] A Thompson might wear my silk stockings, or a Perkins might smoke the Duke's cigars, but they would never do anything wickedder than that.

VAN LOON—[*To MISS PACKER.*] She has the tenderest and most humane heart. I wish you could hear her defending the Bolsheviks. I don't quite go as far as that myself, although I'm a Socialist, and believe in equality, and all that kind of thing.

MISS PACKER—[*To VAN LOON.*] Oh! I'm a Socialist, too, of course, but father is too funny about it; he says that Democracy is sacred, but that Socialism is all—er—damn nonsense. [*Giggling.*]

DUCHESS—Now, Van Rensselaer, when are we going to meet our great Mervyn? Mr. Rosengarten promised to have him here to-day. I know he hates meeting people, but still——

ROSENGARTEN—I'm afraid he does, Duchess; but he assured me that he would be here at half past four. He's perfectly vague; he simply doesn't live in this world at all.

DUCHESS—Naturally—of course not. He couldn't paint like that if he did. But you really must have him here. We'll be back in a few minutes. Come into the gallery, Van Rensselaer; I want to look at the Mervyns again—it's an obsession, an intoxication.

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LEVINESON—Yes—ah—we might do that.

DUCHESS—[*To the PACKERS, who are solemnly grouped in admiration before Indians.*] Ah, those Indians! those glorious Indians! I have two beautiful ones, Mr. Packer. I was the first to buy them, wasn't I, Mr. Rosengarten? They're pure Egyptian in sentiment; perfectly exotic!

[*Exit, followed by LEVINESON.*]

VAN LOON—[*Immediately assuming a grand manner in absence of DUCHESS and LEVINESON. To MRS. PACKER.*] How I would love to be able to buy another one. What sincerity of line. I was among the very first to appreciate them. You have read, of course, Van Rensselaer-Levineson's exquisite book on the Indians?

MISS PACKER—Oh yes; like all his books, it gives one a unique insight into art. He's certainly the greatest critic since Ruskin. [*Dropping her voice.*] I'm so anxious for father to buy them. [*Indicating Indians.*]

VAN LOON—[*Sympathetically.*] He must. I'll help you. [*Aloud.*] There are only a few left outside private collections and museums.

MRS. PACKER—And just think, they used to be in front of every cigar store in America! My! If we only could have appreciated them then!

ROSENGARTEN—Mrs. Packer, it's always that way. Think of the great Guardi, who sold his pictures on the piazza in Venice for a bottle of wine; and a Guardi now brings fifty thousand dollars or more. And the divine Watteau, who painted theatre scenery for three francs a week.

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PACKER—[*Delighted at being able to join in.*] I remember what Mr. Morgan paid for those panels by Watteau.

MISS PACKER—[*Impatiently.*] Oh, father, you're thinking of Fragonard, aren't you?

PACKER—[*Chagrined.*] Yes, of course; I meant Fragonarde!

ROSENGARTEN—And poor Fragonard died neglected and forgotten, too.

MRS. PACKER—Poor Fragnarde! He was such a perfectly lovely painter.

ROSENGARTEN—The Indians, you see, are really the basis of American art; and for that reason, aside from their æsthetic value, are a corner-stone in the world's art history. Van Rensselaer-Levineson in his book refers to them as American primitives.

VAN LOON—[*With full consciousness of social and artistic superiority.*] Personally, it's only in primitive art that I find soul-satisfaction.

MISS PACKER—Oh, how right you are, Mr. Van Loon!

VAN LOON—In my modest collection I have an exquisite little "Paleo" horse etched on stone. [*Most patronizingly.*] That's the Paleolithic period, you know; Van Rensselaer and I always call them "Paleos." I have a Neolithic sepulchral pot too.

ROSENGARTEN—And your sacred Egyptian cats are superb, Mr. Van Loon.

VAN LOON—Yes, they really are. I'm sure you would be delighted with my Sung and Han pieces too, and my Aztec masks; but I must admit that I have a great weakness for my tear vases from the Euphrates Valley; they are so symbolical.

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MISS PACKER—[*Preciously sentimental.*] Think of the tears that have trickled into them.

VAN LOON—[*With reminiscent bathos.*] I suppose you'll think me absurd, but when my Japanese nightingale died, that had sung to me for twelve long years, the Duchess and I let our tears fall into them.

MRS. PACKER—[*Wagging her head with ingratiating sympathy.*] I call that real touching, Mr. Van Loon.

VAN LOON—[*Loftily.*] No. I've rarely cared for anything modern. In fact I'm amazed to see the effect Mervyn has upon me.

ROSENGARTEN—Ah! but Mervyn's art has the divine simplicity, which you, like all great connoisseurs, cherish.

PACKER—[*To KOUGELMAN, aside, with suave commercial voice.*] I'd like to know how much you're asking for your pair of Indians?

KOUGELMAN—To be quite honest, Mr. Packer, I can't face the thought of selling them. They've become so rare; it's practically impossible to get them now.

PACKER—[*Abashed.*] But that's why I want them. Well, then, how about the Virgin?

KOUGELMAN—Now, I would bitterly hate to disappoint you, Mr. Packer, but Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson says it would be a sin for such a Della Quercia not to go to the Louvre or the Metropolitan Museum.

PACKER—I wish you'd reconsider it; I would so much like to have these three pieces for my collection. Don't you really think you might be able to part with at least one of the Indians?

KOUGELMAN—[*Pointing to picture on wall.*] I

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would so much rather sell you that beautiful Van Dyck.

PACKER—[*Fretfully.*] All my friends have Van Dycks, but none of them have Indians.

KOUGELMAN—Ah, that's just it; they're so rare.

DUCHESS—[*Suddenly rushing in, carrying picture, and followed by LEVINESON, who is visibly annoyed. Excitedly.*] I couldn't help it, Van Rensselaer; I've done it now anyhow. I don't know what you'll say, Mr. Rosengarten, but I just stole it off the wall, and I'm going to take it home with me in the motor. I simply can't live without it. Look at Van Rensselaer! He's perfectly furious.

LEVINESON—[*Exasperated.*] Well, it's not done, you know—it's simply not done in the middle of an Exhibition!

DUCHESS—[*Persuasively.*] Now, my dear J.R., you'll let me take it, won't you? Won't you, Mr. Kougelman?

KOUGELMAN—How could we refuse you anything, Duchess?

DUCHESS—[*Exhibiting picture to admiring group.*] Look at it! I understand it all now through the picture. Mervyn calls it *Einstein's Relativity*. I look at the picture, go into a state of Mamas, and the idea of relativity becomes perfectly clear. Normie, look! See how it balances—this mass with that mass, this spot of colour with that. What psychism of patterns! [Catching VAN LOON by the arm.] And the relative flight of clouds there gives the sense of velocity and time. All this here is space. Time and space. Space and time. There is Einstein's entire theory elucidated. Amazing! Incredible! [Sinking into chair.]

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VAN LOON—Yes, yes. Marvellous, marvellous! [*Aside to others.*] The dear Duchess is so psychic. [*Aside to LEVINSON, eagerly.*] Van Rensselaer, come in and select two with me. I'm afraid they'll all be gone. Are they asking enormous prices? Please come. [*Grasps his arm.*]

LEVINSON—[*Petulantly.*] Another day, another day. [VAN LOON *drags him out.*]

DUCHESS—Ouf! I'm simply bankrupt. Here, Mr. Kougelman. [*Hands him catalogue.*] I've marked on the catalogue the ones I want. I've bought six, but I'd like to have bought all of them.

MISS PACKER—Oh, Duchess, I congratulate you, and how I envy you!

MRS. PACKER—Ezra, you must buy some immediately. [*Aside to him.*] We'd be the first to have them in New York.

KOUGELMAN—[*Reading from catalogue.*] Let me see. No. 10, *Ideagenous Invisibility*; No. 13, *Elliptical Ectoplasmic Elusiveness*.

MISS PACKER—How geometrically fluidic!

KOUGELMAN—No. 17, *Pentadactylic Preadamite Postulates*; No. 18, *Subliminal Vallisneriaceæ*.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Aside.*] Subliminal Jack-assery.

KOUGELMAN—No. 29, *Virginal Vertigo*.

MRS. PACKER—[*Ecstatically.*] Virginal Vertigo. Oh, my, what pure imagination!

MISS PACKER—It's so pagan.

KOUGELMAN—No. 33, *Einstein's Relativity*.

ROSENGARTEN—Let me congratulate you, Duchess, on the wisdom and sagacity of your selection. [*They*

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all congratulate her. Aside to KOUGELMAN.] Start Mervyn playing the flute.

[Exit KOUGELMAN right.]

DUCHESS—Now, Mr. Packer, when you move into your wonderful New York palace, you must have some Mervyns.

PACKER—*[Aside to DUCHESS.]* Yes, but they are so indifferent here. I've tried to buy the Indians and the Virgin. They don't seem to want to sell anything.

DUCHESS—Let me arrange it for you; I always have difficulty too. They are dealers of course, but they love art.

[Enter VAN LOON, in great elation, waving catalogue, followed by LEVINESON.]

VAN LOON—I've done it! I've bought two!

DUCHESS—That's splendid, Normie! Which ones?

VAN LOON—*[Triumphantly.]* *Spectro-psychic Daliance*, and No. 53, *Subjective Pathos in Trigonometry*. *[Congratulatory exclamations from all.]*

[Re-enter KOUGELMAN, leaving door ajar.]

DUCHESS—Bravo, Normie! But where is Mervyn, Mr. Rosengarten? I must be leaving soon, as I am opening a Charity Bazaar for our poor blind soldiers. That's why we are all wearing our war decorations. I'm to meet the Duke there. Mr. and Mrs. Packer, you know, were such wonderful patriots. *[With the usual ironical undercurrent.]* Mrs. Packer ran a hospital in France, while Mr. Packer ran the biggest munition factory in America.

MRS. PACKER—*[Melting under ducal compliment.]* We all tried to do our bit, but your hospital, Duchess, was much bigger than mine.

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[*Sound of flute is heard from adjoining room.*]

DUCHESS—Why, what's that? I hear a flute.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Mysteriously.*] It's he—Mervyn! When he's not painting, he plays the flute. I'll see if I can persuade him to come in for a few moments. [*Arriving at door right; dramatically.*] You'll find him as extraordinary as his pictures. [*Exit right.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Endeavouring to conceal painful apprehension.*] Of course he's most eccentric, most eccentric.

DUCHESS—Eccentric! But naturally, Mr. Kougelman. Imagine a genius being commonplace like us. This is a rare moment!

MRS. PACKER—I've met any number of Grand Dukes and Princes, but never a real genius before.

VAN LOON—What a memorable day! [*Aside.*] The creator of my *Subjective Pathos in Trigonometry*.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Re-enters, holding MERVYN's arm. MERVYN is effectively dressed in dark well-cut clothes, which have been carefully selected by ROSENGARTEN, with a view to producing the desired impression. He wears a Byronic collar, soft white double cuffs, rolling back over coat sleeves, and a flowing black silk tie. His patent leather shoes, too, are of the best make. He wears white socks. His hair has been allowed to grow longer and is bobbed below his ears, after the fashion of the Italian primitives. They advance slowly to centre and stop. ROSENGARTEN steps aside, and with great solemnity makes a full-arm gesture of introduction:*] Duchess, I present the Master.

KOUGELMAN—[*Aside.*] Oh, my God! I feel completely paralysed.

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ROSENGARTEN—Mr. and Mrs. Packer, Miss Packer, Mr. Van Loon—The Master. Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson you know.

DUCHESS—[*Leaves chair, quickly steps forward and shakes hands.*] Master, we were afraid you might disappoint us again.

ROSENGARTEN—The Duchess is your fairy-godmother, Mervyn, and she lives in your world of dreams and fairies.

MERVYN—[*Naïvely.*] But she is much too young and beautiful to be a fairy-godmother.

KOUGELMAN—[*Under his breath, with suppressed delight.*] Good! Good! [ROSENGARTEN *frowns at him.*]

DUCHESS—[*Radiantly.*] I see, Master, that you not only have genius in art, but genius in chivalry.

MERVYN—[*Dreamily.*] Chivalry! What is chivalry?

KOUGELMAN—[*Aside, despairingly.*] Oh, my God! my God!

ROSENGARTEN—[*Quickly meeting situation.*] Exactly! What is chivalry? And with what fine irony you have asked that question in this epoch of commercial vulgarity.

DUCHESS—Oh, how adorable! How clever! [To LEVINESON, *with sly taunting smile.*] You see, Van Rensselaer, Mr. Mervyn finds the word chivalry obsolete, as it is of course, unless we resurrect it. Now there's a theme for a book—a wonderful idea! I never thought of it before! And the Master gave it to me in a sentence. A book about words which we constantly use, but which have lost their true significance.

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VAN LOON—Yes, it could be called *The Graveyard of Words*. You must write it, Van Rensselaer.

LEVINESON—[*Dryly.*] I'm no grave-digger.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Humorously.*] Why, no; he's our obstetrician of new art.

MERVYN—[*With same naïve simplicity, which is interpreted by all as a whimsical and mystical manifestation of genius.*] Do you believe in fairies, Duchess?

DUCHESS—Of course we all do, except Van Rensselaer, who's so cynical. He only believes in himself. But we believe, don't we, Normie?

VAN LOON—I should say we did——

DUCHESS—And you, Patricia, and Mrs. Packer, I'm sure you believe in spirits and fairies?

MRS. PACKER—[*With conviction.*] Oh, I've seen them often, and ghosts too! But don't ask Mr. Packer; he thinks it's all da—eh—nonsense.

DUCHESS—Nonsense! Why, Mr. Packer, aren't you ashamed of yourself? I was reading only this morning a long article in the paper written by a celebrated scientist, who saw blue fairies in Canada, and green fairies in California, and in New Zealand he discovered colonies of them in all colours.

VAN LOON—I saw another article in *The Daily Mail* with actual photographs of fairies taken by a celebrated scientist in Scotland.

MISS PACKER—And those wonderful photographs of ectoplasmic emanations!

MRS. PACKER—Science is just simply marvellous.

MERVYN—[*To DUCHESS, as before.*] And do you wear a high crown, and wave your wand and have everything happen you wish? [*General laughter.*]

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LEVINESON—[*Approaching a smile.*] She most certainly does.

VAN LOON—Yes, the Duchess wears the highest and most beautiful crown in Paris; and when she waves her great black fan at the Opera we all tremble, I assure you. [*Continued laughter.*]

DUCHESS—[*Shaking her finger at him coquettishly.*] Now, Normie! [*Looking at her watch.*] Oh, but we must be going. We can't keep our poor blind soldiers waiting. But, Mr. Rosengarten, why don't you bring Mr. Mervyn to the concert to-night, which we're having for our Poilus after the Bazaar?

VAN LOON—[*To MERVYN.*] Oh yes, you must come!

DUCHESS—You really must! [*She suddenly strikes a pose, and starts declaiming.*] For they gave their sight for their country, so that our political leaders might see more clearly. And their sacrifice was not in vain; as we are now entering a new epoch of brotherly love, self-sacrifice and altruism. [*Assuming normal voice.*] That's the way I begin my opening address.

ALL—Bravo, Duchess! Bravo!

DUCHESS—[*To MERVYN.*] And you, Master, have also given your sight to us, so that we may see the truth more clearly by looking at your inspired canvases. [*Seizing his hand.*] Good-bye! Thank you for the wonderful things you have said, and the inspiration you have given us. Your imagination has illuminated a moment of Pandean fancy, with rhythmic persuasiveness. [*MERVYN smiles impassively.*]

MRS. PACKER—Good-bye! It must be perfectly wonderful to be a real genius.

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MERVYN—[*Sadly.*] I would much rather be a real man.

MISS PACKER—[*Shaking hands.*] I shall always remember your rare and beautiful thoughts of this afternoon, which take one out of a world of monotone into the iridescent splendour of reflection.

VAN LOON—I'm proud to tell you, Master, that I now own your great picture, *Subjective Pathos in Trigonometry*. Marvellous! It was a revelation to listen to you. [*Going towards door.*] He has a smile of radiant twilight. 've never felt so subjective.

[LEVINESON gives MERVYN paternal pat on the arm.]

DUCHESS—[*From doorway.*] Come on, Van Rensselaer! come on, everybody, we're going to be late. [*Exeunt PACKER, MRS. PACKER, VAN LOON and LEVINESON. DUCHESS, running back into room, aside to ROSENGARTEN:*] Oh, Mr. Rosengarten, I've just had a great idea. We must take him to America and have an Exhibition in your New York galleries. Mr. Packer must give him a ball in his magnificent new house. But we'll talk of all that later. . . . He's marvellous! perfectly marvellous! He speaks entirely in symbols, doesn't he? But I must run. [*To MISS PACKER, who is lingering on threshold.*] My dear, I feel as if I'd met a saint.

MISS PACKER—[*Following the DUCHESS out.*] He looks and talks like a Messiah.

[*Exeunt both.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Collapsing into chair, and mopping brow.*] Thank God that's over. I haven't been so nervous since my wedding day.

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ROSENCRANTZ—[Turning MERVYN on back.] Good boy, Mervyn, you did very well indeed, and we're both much pleased with you.

MERVYN—I'm so glad, Mr. Rosenkrantz. I try to do everything you tell me, because I love you and Mr. Krogshus.

ROSENCRANTZ—Yes, dear boy, we want to do everything we can to make you happy. Here's a book with a lot of pretty pictures. Sit down over there and look at it. [MERVYN sits down facing Virginia, and looks at book.]

STEIN—[Silently opens door, thrusts in head and shoulders.] Oh, Mr. Krogshus, I think I've landed a gentleman from Buffalo—a Mr. Free-Dillon—with a number of Mervyns! But you'd better come out and check it. He's still a little wobbly.

KROGSHUS—All right! All right! I'll come directly. Oh Stein, work that up about the Duchess taking the picture off the wall and get it into the morning's press.

STEIN—Right! [Nods meaningly. Exit.]

KROGSHUS—[Turning to ROSENCRANTZ, with amazed chuckle.] I wish you could have seen Packer's expression when I refused to sell him the Indians, and told him that the Virgin was destined for the Metropolitan. He's hot after them now, and will swallow any price to get them.

ROSENCRANTZ—Well done, old man! for when he finally succeeds in persuading us to part with them, Krogshus and Co. will not only receive Packer's cheque, but Packer's gratitude as well. [KROGSHUS, nipping his head and still chuckling with self-satisfaction, goes into gallery. To MERVYN, who is absorbed

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profound sadness.] I always remember the evening we sat under the cherry-tree together, and you took my hand and smiled to me the way my mother does. I wonder why the big tears were in your eyes when I felt so very, very happy and grown-up. And there was light everywhere, and everything was so easy to understand; and then you went away to live with my father in Heaven, and the light seemed to go away too, Marie . . . and I felt like a little boy again . . . [*Continues day-dream in silence.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Leaning against door, looks from Virgin to MERVYN, and in a low melodious voice of deep melancholy recites Poe's poem, "To One in Paradise":*]

"Thou wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain, and a shrine,
All wreathed in fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise,
But to be overcast!"

[*With emotion.*] And who will ever know that I have carried that poem in my heart all these years? [*After a moment he suddenly throws off his reverie, and looks at MERVYN compassionately.*] Poor helpless Goy. My heart goes out to you; but when I think of what your race has done to mine, I feel justified in making

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dupes and fools of you all. [*Turns on electric light by door, and enters gaily.*] Here's your hat and coat, Mervyn. And now we'll have dinner, and then the circus.

MERVYN—[*Jumping up.*] Oh yes! the circus—and the clown?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Holding out MERVYN's coat.*] Yes—the clown.

CURTAIN

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ACT III

New York: four months later. Middle of April, 1920. In the magnificent art gallery of EZRA P. PACKER's new Fifth Avenue palace. It is nine o'clock on the night of the famous Mamas ball.

In rear, facing audience, between two massive double-door entrances, is a monumental, grandiose mantelpiece, designed by Philibert Delorme, with superb life-size caryatides and innumerable figures in bas-relief, sculptured in marble by Jean Goujon. The huge triumphant golden portals, with pilasters, overdoors and supporting columns, have been imported from one of the most sumptuous palaces in Genoa.

They are of rare and superb design, of skilful exquisite craftsmanship, and architecturally perfect. They, like the mantelpiece, are noble, sincere, generous, joyous, creative, inspiring—magnificent; and are as expressive of their epoch as is our self-conscious, sordid, mean, vulgar, pharisaic, chaotic art expressive of ours.¹

In the spaces between this glorious hearth and the regal doorways, standing on their stone pedestals, are the two cigar-store Indians of the previous act, recently acquired by MR. PACKER from

¹ "I do not think we are stronger, but weaker than men of the Middle Ages. The men of the sixteenth century were strong men, stronger in brain power than our men." Thus declared Mr. Gladstone in 1892, even before England had fallen into the hands of Lloyd George, and before she had degenerated into having fair ladies and communist mattoids as Members of Parliament.

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KOUGELMAN & Co., for, as ISAAC KOUGELMAN put it, "*the mere song of forty thousand dollars, which is nothing when one considers that they are rare dix-neuvième examples of the American pre-Civil War period.*"

Against the middle of left wall is placed, on a beautiful fifteenth-century column, the statue of the Virgin, attributed by VAN RENSSELAER-LEVINESON to Jacopo Della Quercia, also recently acquired, as a great bargain, by Mr. PACKER from KOUGELMAN's for fifty thousand dollars; which, again, according to ISAAC, was "practically giving it away," although he had originally bought it for five hundred francs.

Directly opposite, against right wall, is a beautiful bronze statue, mounted on pedestal, of a young boy by Donatello. Behind these statues are hung two rare Gothic tapestries, luminously interwoven with gold and silver threads, enveloping them with a shimmering light of enchantment. As one gazes at these two supreme works of art, created out of a humorous, mystical, whimsical, exuberant love of nature, one realizes how much happier humanity must have been in those Gothic days of hobgoblins, sprites, elves and gnomes, than it is at present, when men have put their faith in science, which has now brought them to their knees in plumbing and motor sanctuaries to worship in front of porcelain-lined altars erected to their great God of Comfort. To my way of thinking, even the little Gothic rabbit with his tiny silver tail, peeping out from under a gigantic Gothic

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cabbage in the lower left-hand corner of one of these tapestries, is of far greater significance, as far as true civilization is concerned, than are all the "choo-choo cars," motors, ocean leviathans, electrical clap-traps and plumbing fetishes in the entire world.

On either side of the Virgin and the Donatello are long console tables, gems from the Doge's palace. Over them hang rare Venetian mirrors. On these four consoles are marvellous Ming vases, loot from the royal palace in Peking, wherein a pot-hatted, mob-cringing President, wearing "standardized suitings," is now ensconced and, like a mad bull in a china shop, bellowing to the "plain people" in the raucous, hocus-pocus, croakus, democratic chorus of all the other "liberty, equality, fraternity," hugger-mugger Presidents and effete, democratic Kings.

On the walls are hung a single line of "Old Masters," several of which have been pronounced of questionable authenticity by the world-famous art critic, VAN-RENSSELAER-LEVINESON, who hopes to have them shortly replaced by others of his own selection.

On the left wall, in a double row, are about twenty pictures of various sizes, by MERVYN.

The preparations have just been completed for the Mamas ball. On the great hearthstone, projecting four or five feet into the room, and about four inches high, has been set up a small speaker's platform, two steps above hearth level. The steps of platform are carpeted in blue, and the base is

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solidly banked with white roses and carnations. Great masses of Madonna lilies fill corners of room. The Virgin is enshrined with lilies of the valley. Four great resplendent gold chairs, covered with old cramoisy velvet, treasures of Lorenzo the Magnificent, are placed diagonally to left of platform. Behind them are a hundred or more gilt cotillion chairs in rows. Opposite are more rows of cotillion chairs. The centre of gallery is left empty.

The great portals in rear open on to a vast conservatory, in which may be seen Della Robbias, Greek vases, and a beautiful fountain by Barthélemy Prieur. Beyond conservatory one has a vista of magnificent salons furnished with old-world art treasures of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

THE CURTAIN RISES ON AN EMPTY SCENE

Suddenly the portals to rear right are thrown open by two footmen in knee-breeches and powdered hair. The butler and other footmen are seen in distance. MRS. PACKER, dressed in an elaborate tea-gown, and with a violet silk robe thrown over her arm, enters with MISS PACKER, who is also in tea-gown and is carrying a phantastic helmet head-dress surmounted by an imaginary white bird with turquoise-blue crest. This bird, with outstretched wings, is the symbol of "Mamasism."

PACKER, in full evening dress and wearing a large white boutonnière, follows, smoking a huge

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American magnate cigar. The ladies are smoking perfumed cigarettes in paper holders of conspicuous length.

PACKER—[*Irritably.*] Well, I'm not going to wear it at the ball to-night, and that's the end of it!

MRS. PACKER—[*Petulantly.*] Now, Ezra, we've been working over your helmet for days, and it would be just real mean if you won't wear it.

MISS PACKER—[*Coaxing.*] Oh, please, father! Just try it on, and you'll see how well you look in it. Here—a moment—do let me put it on your head. There! [*Placing helmet on his head.*]

MRS. PACKER—My! you look perfectly grand—like Lohengreen!

MISS PACKER—Not "green," mother—Lohengrin.

PACKER—It's all right for Lohengreen or grin, but I'll be damned if I'm going to make a loony gazook of myself!

MISS PACKER—Wait a minute, father; you must see the whole effect. Here, put on your robe. Of course it doesn't look right with your evening dress. [*She puts his cloak on.*]

PACKER—[*Admiring himself in mirror.*] I don't mind the robe, but I'll be blowed if I'm going to let the whole of New York see me with that Mamas-bird-business on my nut!

MRS. PACKER—[*Shocked.*] Why, Ezra! how can you talk that way? It's almost sac-religious!

MISS PACKER—[*Fervently.*] It really is sac-religious, for this is a cult. It's the greatest art event of the century. Our ball to-night will pass into history.

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PACKER—[*Taking off helmet.*] Well, if I'm going into history, I'm going into it as Ezra P. Packer and not as one of those Grand Opera guys, anyhow, Patsy!

MISS PACKER—[*Snappishly.*] Don't call me Patsy! it's so common. My name is Patricia, father. [*Changing tone of voice, ardently.*] You don't seem to realize what this means. No one has ever been received in this country like Mervyn. Why! from the moment he arrived and was met by "the Friends of Art," in a squadron of motor-boats carrying "Mamas" flags, he has had one continuous triumph!

MRS. PACKER—[*Excitedly.*] And the newspapers have been full of nothing else.

MISS PACKER—I haven't yet got over that amazing symbolical dance by Isadora's pupils, which the Duchess arranged on the pier while Mervyn was landing.

MRS. PACKER—It was so terribly artistic I could just hardly stand it!

MISS PACKER—It was even more wonderful than Maeterlinck's *Bluebird* arrival!

PACKER—Well, art's all right in its place, but if you ask my opinion, this affair has gone too far anyhow. When it gets to the point of having Mervyn shoes, Mervyn cigars, Mamas corsets, Mamas hats, Mervyn pyjamas and God knows what else!—and when I hear you and Patricia and all our friends talking about nothing but Mamas and Mervyn, Mervyn and Mamas, it makes me feel at times as if I were bug-house.

MRS. PACKER—But think how prominent we've all become by it, Ezra! There are pages again in to-day's papers about our Mamas ball to-night, with enormous pictures of us all.

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MISS PACKER—[*Ecstatically.*] Yes, to-night will be the culmination, the apotheosis of spiritual beauty! It will be simply sublime! [*Nervously.*] But do come, mother, it's getting late, and we must hurry and dress.

MRS. PACKER—[*Indignantly.*] Really, Ezra! I think it's too bad to see you acting like this at the last moment about your helmet. I'm just that nervous about the success of the ball, I'm tremblin' like a leaf.

MISS PACKER—[*Contemptuously.*] Never mind, mother. Don't pay any attention to father. He's behaving like a rank materialist and reactionary. [*Draws mother towards door.*]

PACKER—[*Defiantly.*] It's a good thing for the Packer family that Ezra P. is a materialist! for if there were only "Mamas" in his bank account, there wouldn't be much of a ball to-night. [*Shouting after them.*] But I'll be damned if I'll be called a reactionary by anybody! [*Exeunt MRS. PACKER and daughter disdainfully. He picks up helmet and puts it on before mirror.*] I'm sorry to disappoint the womenfolk, but I won't make myself ridiculous for them, anyhow! [*Admiring himself before mirror.*] It's not bad!—quite becoming! I suppose I do look rather like Lohengreen. But what would my Directors say if they saw their President like this? [*Coquetting with himself.*] No one will look better in it than I do, though. No, I can't wear it! [*Takes it off reluctantly. Looking towards MERVYN's pictures.*] I wonder what all this "Mamas" thing really is, anyhow. To be perfectly honest, I've never felt a sixth sense, and I've done pretty well in life with five. I've looked at these darn pictures until I'm dizzy without ever having that

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famous glow on the top of my head, over my eyebrows, or any other damn place. I swear I can't make head or tail out of any of them! I wouldn't even know if they were upside down! [*Seeking reassurance.*] But there's Levineson, who is considered the greatest critic in the world, whose opinion is undisputed. He's written a book about them. And there's Rosengarten and Kougelman, both damned shrewd business men—and all the others. And yet Ezra P. Packer is no fool, I can tell you. Look at the newspaper articles, and the magazines, all calling it the new art, and having this Mervyn fellow even greater than Raphael! And if I were to say what I really thought, I'd be laughed at as an ignoramus. [*Looking towards the Indians.*] I can understand the Indians all right, although I don't see why they weren't recognized as works of Art while they were in front of all the cigar stores. They could then have been bought for a few dollars apiece. And to think I had to get the Duchess to actually beg Kougelman to sell them to me now for forty thousand dollars the pair! Damn it! it might be a good idea to begin collecting barber-poles before they, too, are recognized as works of Art. [*Looking at Virgin.*] And imagine that blessed Virgin over there stickin' me for fifty thousand dollars! This being an art collector is no joke; but it gets you to the top of society all right. The ball in my new palace here to-night will cinch it. To be in the swim these days, you have to be artistic. My daughter understands. She's a clever girl to have taken up sculpture. [*Dolefully.*] Although I did have to pony up a neat sum to that shrewd old Jew of a

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French Senator for landing the bust she did in the Luxembourg Museum.

[*Enter OSCAR CADMAN, with letter in his hand.*]

CADMAN—Excuse me, Mr. Packer, there are a number of reporters waiting in the corridor. Would you like to see them? They are most anxious to interview a member of the family.

PACKER—Nop! tell 'em it's impossible, as we're all so busy; but you can give 'em the list of guests, description of costumes, and all the rest of it.

CADMAN—Very good, Mr. Packer. They are asking the significance of the Mamas ballet. What shall I say?

PACKER—[*Aside.*] Blessed if I know. [*Aloud.*] Now look here, Cadman, you've seen the rehearsals oftener than I have; what do you make of it yourself?

CADMAN—[*Embarrassed.*] Well, sir—you see—er—I suppose—er—the idea—er——

PACKER—[*Aside.*] He's in the same box as I am. [*Aloud.*] Well?

CADMAN—It's—er—the new art rhythm—interpreting higher mathematics in dancing.

PACKER—Very good. Go on.

CADMAN—[*Sheepishly, as if repeating a lesson.*] It was Miss Packer who explained to me that—er—through repetitions of symmetrical and asymmetrical movements,—er—instinctolatescent sensations were released by dynamic infiltrations of objective emotion and fused with subliminal phenomena, thereby creating Mamas, or the sixth sense.

PACKER—[*Dryly.*] I see. Hum! most intelligible!

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[*Aggressively.*] Cadman, how long have you been my secretary?

CADMAN—[*Surprised.*] Why, about three years, Mr. Packer.

PACKER—Are you satisfied with your job?

CADMAN—[*Intimidated.*] Entirely, sir.

PACKER—[*Sternly.*] Well, then, if you wish to continue with me, you had better leave Art and Mamas to the ladies. Is that a letter for me in your hand?

CADMAN—[*Nervously.*] Oh yes, sir. I was bringing it to you. It was just left here by Peppino Angelino. It's marked "Private."

PACKER—You mean the little sculptor man, who works in my daughter's studio? What's he writing to me about? [*Takes letter and begins to open it.*] As soon as Mr. Rosengarten and Mr. Kougelman come, send them up here immediately. On second thoughts, have those reporters wait until they come.

CADMAN—Very good, Mr. Packer. [*Exit.*]

PACKER—[*Reading letter.*] "Mr. Packer, Noble Sir! I hears the bust I make for your honourable daughter in her studio, was buyed by Luxembourg Museum. I did not before thinks I was so great sculptor, and now as I be so great, I thinks it only fair, for you to pay me twenty-five thousand dollars, for this great honour, coming to your daughter and family through me. If you don't pay to me these moneys immediately, I will obliged be to tell all peoples how great sculptor I am, and it was me who made the head and not your honourable daughter, who can make nothings. Respectfully yours, Peppino Angelino." Hump! The little blackmailing Dago! That's pleasant. It will cost

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five or ten thousand at least to shut him up. At all events, one bust in the Luxembourg Gallery is enough artistic fame for the Packer family at present. [CADMAN *throws open door and admits* ROSENGARTEN and KOUGELMAN, *both in evening dress.*] Ah, here you are! I've been expecting you! But where's our genius? [*Shaking hands.*]

ROSENGARTEN—Oh, he'll be here, Mr. Packer, although geniuses are apt to arrive too late or too early, you know.

KOUGELMAN—Mr. Packer, this will certainly be a memorable night in Art.

PACKER—I hope it'll go through all right. Oh, by the way, Mr. Rosengarten, there are a number of newspaper men downstairs. I'll have them sent up. Will you and Mr. Kougelman be kind enough to give them some notes and put them wise on the "Mamas" ballet?

ROSENGARTEN—Of course; with pleasure!

PACKER—It's so important for the newspapers to get it correctly. See you later. [*With wave of hand. Exit.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*To KOUGELMAN.*] Packer doesn't seem to realize that the power of the Press is in getting everything incorrectly.

KOUGELMAN—Correctly or incorrectly. I only hope that "Mamas" doesn't get me. It wouldn't take an awful lot to make me believe in it all myself.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Whimsically.*] But why not? To be able to believe in anything is such a luxury.

KOUGELMAN—There was no luxury in the nightmare I had last night, I can tell you.

ROSENGARTEN—Nightmare! Really!

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KOUGELMAN—I should say so. I dreamed I was suddenly surrounded in our galleries by a tribe of wooden Indians doing a war dance, and brandishing enormous Henry Clay cigars, and while they were scalping me the Duchess and Van Loon shrieked “Mamas” into my ears, until I awoke in a cold sweat of terror.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Chaffing.*] While you were being scalped I suppose you felt that little sixth sense glow on the top of your head, like the Duchess—eh, Isaac?

KOUGELMAN—[*With comic seriousness.*] You’ll laugh; it was suggestion, of course, but the top of my head did burn for several hours afterwards. [*Touches top of head.*]

[*Enter CADMAN, followed by three newspaper reporters.*]

CADMAN—[*Introducing reporters.*] Gentlemen, this is Mr. Rosengarten and Mr. Kougelman, who will give you the notes you desire for the ball. [*They all shake hands. CADMAN retires.*]

FIRST REPORTER—We all of course know Mr. Rosengarten and Mr. Kougelman.

ROSENGARTEN—Mr. Packer has asked us to give you any information you desire.

FIRST REPORTER—It’s very kind of you and Mr. Kougelman to give us a few moments of your precious time. [*After the traditional performance of throat-clearing.*] Now, Mr. Rosengarten, we hear there is to be a Mamas ballet danced by the most exclusive members of the younger set. Just what is the significance of this dance?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Waving them into chairs.*] Be

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seated, gentlemen—be seated. [*They all seat themselves.*] Well, as you have probably heard, the ballet is composed of twelve dancers, six gentlemen and six ladies, and is divided into six parts.

SECOND REPORTER—[*Taking out notebook.*] Representing, as I understand, the senses?

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, the five objective senses, which, fused together, make the subjective sixth, or Mamas.

THIRD REPORTER — [*Taking shorthand notes.*] Hindoo word, isn't it, Mr. Rosengarten?

ROSENGARTEN—Quite so.

KOUGELMAN—[*Parroting.*] It means, you see, "the dual force generated by the attuned union of the two sexes within each individual."

FIRST REPORTER—[*Taking it down.*] "Attuned union of the two sexes." Yes, an ethereal conception.

ROSENGARTEN—Each couple will represent one of the five senses, and by rhythmic amalgamation and dynamic polarization in choregraphics they will magnetically weld the disparate elements and generate the subliminal sixth, after having passed beyond trans-marginal consciousness by means of rotascopic multiplication of movement and geometrical postulates of motion.—[*With blasé felinity.*] You follow me?

FIRST REPORTER—[*With unctuous earnestness.*] Perfectly! Your description is wonderfully lucid, Mr. Rosengarten.

THIRD REPORTER—I never quite understood what "Mamas" meant before, but now, of course——

SECOND REPORTER—It's perfectly simple after you've grasped it. [*All continue to take notes.*]

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KOUGELMAN—The Duchess of Mandelieu and Mr. Van Loon will represent the sixth sense.

FIRST REPORTER—[*With true democratic snobbishness.*] How proud we should be to claim the Duchess of Mandelieu as our compatriot.

SECOND REPORTER—Her *Memoirs of the Great War* is certainly an astounding achievement.

KOUGELMAN—[*Pompously.*] History will see her as greater than Madame de Staël!

FIRST REPORTER—And the Duchess is to represent the sixth sense, Mr. Rosengarten?

ROSENGARTEN—Yes. She and Mr. Van Loon will together emerge from a silver egg, representing the Subliminal Self, after the dancers have passed with Dionysian demonstration of the sixth logarithm of seven places of decimals into pure concepts of Apollonian symbolism. At this moment, Mervyn, the Master “Mamasist,” will appear, and later from the dais there [*pointing to the platform*] will expound the cult of “Mamasism” in connection with his painting.

SECOND REPORTER—It’s the sixth logarithm, isn’t it, Mr. Rosengarten?

ROSENGARTEN—Certainly; only the sixth could be possible, as applied to Mamasist dancing. My description of the dance is pasigraphical, you understand.

THIRD REPORTER—Pas—i—graphical?

ROSENGARTEN—Yes; it was the celebrated Péano who first created this word to characterize his mathematical treatises, which he wrote without using a word of the usual language.

SECOND REPORTER—Oh, I see!

FIRST REPORTER—[*Witheringly, to the two other*

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reporters.] You've surely heard of Péano! Goodness!

ROSENGARTEN—As I've said before, I've merely made use of pasigraphy in my description of Mamasist dancing.

FIRST REPORTER—But Marinetti—

ROSENGARTEN—Marinetti's idea is that by the fusion of man and machine he expresses the metalism of Futurist Art.

FIRST REPORTER—And may I ask, Mr. Rosengarten, how "Mamasism" essentially differs from Cubism and Futurism?

ROSENGARTEN—Ah, you see, Mamasism goes infinitely further in all branches of Art than Cubism, Futurism, and Dadaism, etc., for all those schools are limited to the purely materialistic expression of life, based on mechanics, whereas "Mamasism" is unlimited and founded upon the astronomical and higher mathematical conception of cosmic rhythm.

SECOND REPORTER—[*With obvious self-satisfaction.*] Might I refer to Mamasism as Cosmo-rhythmical?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Casually.*] Well, Astro-psycho-cosmo-rhythmical would be more correct. [Winking to KOUGELMAN.]

THIRD REPORTER—Just one word more about the dual sex, Mr. Kougelman.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Looking at his watch.*] Oh! I'm afraid it's getting rather late.

KOUGELMAN—[*Looking at his watch also.*] Yes, and we still have a number of things to arrange.

FIRST REPORTER—I hope we haven't abused your

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kindness. [*Shaking hands with* ROSENGARTEN, *and then with* KOUGELMAN.] You have given us a most brilliant and enlightening interview.

SECOND REPORTER—It will be a real pleasure to write up such a concise and masterful exposition of modern Art.

THIRD REPORTER—You've made it all as clear as day.

ROSENGARTEN—It's always most agreeable to express one's views to such sympathetic and intelligent listeners.

KOUGELMAN AND ROSENGARTEN—Good night, gentlemen!

REPORTERS—Good night!

[*Exeunt* REPORTERS.]

KOUGELMAN—[*Sinking into chair and holding his head.*] Good God! it's all beyond belief. And to think the articles of those blithering idiots will be solemnly swallowed to-morrow by herds of credulous fools!

ROSENGARTEN—It's the eternal repetition. Old humanity never changes fundamentally. In the past it was Priest-ridden, to-day it is Press-ridden, but ridden it will always be. The spirit of the Gothic cathedral of old has passed into the newspaper building of to-day. The priests are the reporters, and the confessional is the interview. The newspaper proprietors have replaced Bishops and Cardinals, and our Republics use the Press as Autocracies used the Church, to manœuvre the mutton-headed mass into subjection. The Church threatened them with Hell and flattered them with promises of Immortality. The Press lashes them with ridicule and scandal, and flat-

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ters them with notoriety, which they mistake for fame.

KOUGELMAN—Well, that's going some, to see the Press as a religious institution!

ROSENGARTEN—But when you come to think of it, isn't the newspaper the modern Bible? When science began to shake the people's faith in Immortality, which is, after all, entirely based on vanity and a sense of self-importance, the mob tried in every way to immortalize itself on earth, and as the Press gave it the possibility of self-advertisement, the newspaper became the shrine.

KOUGELMAN—Well, we've certainly had enough advertisement to make us immortal! To-day there were over two hundred and fifty letters for Mervyn from idiotic women, many with nude photographs, offering themselves as wives, models, and concubines. We could start a shop with all the flowers, bon-bons and truck-muck he receives daily. At this rate, we'll have to get a third secretary to answer all this rot.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Cheerfully.*] Splendid!

KOUGELMAN—The whole thing is incredible—preposterous! I tell you, one has to be pretty well balanced to stand it. [*Apprehensively.*] I can't help feeling there's going to be an awful disaster. This can't keep up indefinitely.

ROSENGARTEN—At first, my poor Isaac, you were afraid of failure, now you're afraid of success.

KOUGELMAN—Success! But this has gotten to be madness! [*Pulling evening newspapers out of his pocket.*] Look at this! Have you seen the evening newspapers? There are columns and columns. Here's an entire page, with enormous head-lines: "The Spread-

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ing Cult of Mamasism." "Mervyn, the Apostle of Mamas." And pictures of him, and the Duchess, Miss Packer, and all of them!

ROSENGARTEN—Well?

KOUGELMAN—Well; all I can tell you is that it is going too far! I can't see why you don't realize it! I haven't slept for a week. There will be a terrible smash. [*Showing another paper.*] Look at all this about a young painter who has committed suicide after futile efforts to experience Mamas. And here's the Rev. Percy Pant giving a Mamas tea-party in his vestry rooms to all New York society. [*Turning over another page of the paper.*] And, damn it, man, read this: "A husband, for calling 'Mamas' 'poppycock,' is almost beaten to death by his wife and daughter. They then both decamp with the wife's lover, who had converted them to 'Mamasism.'"

ROSENGARTEN—But what of it? When the last great prize-fight took place it wasn't a question of columns, it was the entire newspaper; and for weeks there was as much about these two gladiators as when twenty millions of men were fighting to the death on battle-fields! There were cable dispatches; wireless reports of every blow; aeroplanes delivering cinema records of the fight; photographs of the pugilists from childhood, with their families, trainers, and all their court; treatises by scientists and philosophers; hysterical interviews by famous writers; and men who were controlling the world's destinies found time to compare these two sluggers to Phœbus Apollo, Bonaparte, Charles the Twelfth, and heaven knows who else! No!—with all

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modesty, I think we might be allowed a page for Art occasionally.

[*Enter MRS. PACKER in full Mamas regalia. She is dressed, or rather undressed, with a skirt cut just below her knees, revealing elephantine legs in flesh-pink stockings. Her bodice is décolleté to the extent of causing serious apprehension, and is slashed open in the back to the waist-line, showing rolls of quivering fat, separated by a gulch-like slit from shoulder blade to middle. On her head is a golden Mamas helmet with large diamond wings. She is painted, powdered, perfumed, bespangled, bangled, dangled, jangled, twinkling, winking, blinking, sparkling, glittering, shimmering with paillettes and jewels. MISS PACKER follows, wearing a Mamas domino over a fantastic ballet costume.*]

MRS. PACKER—[*Very agitated.*] Oh, Mr. Rosengarten, won't you and Mr. Kougelman please tell Mr. Packer that my dress is all right? He says it's much too short, and even indecent! Fancy my looking indecent! And I've been trying so hard for weeks to have this ball a success. I now see it's just going to be a failure.

ROSENGARTEN—But, Mrs. Packer, I think your dress is lovely! Perfectly lovely!

KOUGELMAN—And most artistic!

MISS PACKER—I told you, mother, your dress was all right, but I'm not so sure about your dance with Mr. Cadman.

MRS. PACKER—[*With disappointed surprise.*] You

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mean to say you don't think I should do my Relativity Dance, which I have worked all these weeks over?

MISS PACKER—I'm afraid Papa won't approve of it. He seems so irritable and nervous to-night.

MRS. PACKER—But, Patricia, it was to be a surprise to your father! and the dancing-master, Signor Muratori, told me yesterday, at our last rehearsal, that it was simply grand, and that I was as light and airy as a fairy. He seemed enchanted, and even declared I was one of his best pupils.

MISS PACKER—Well, mother, I think he might at least say that, as he asks a hundred dollars a lesson.

MRS. PACKER—But what of it? Isn't he the greatest dancing-master in the world? [*Catching sight of CADMAN in evening dress passing in conservatory.*] Oh, Mr. Cadman, we must have a dress rehearsal of our dance. But where's your domino? And tell the orchestra to start up our piece.

CADMAN—[*From conservatory.*] All right, Mrs. Packer. [*Disappears a moment.*]

MRS. PACKER—You've no idea, Mr. Rosengarten, how carefully I've studied every page of Einstein's book on *Relativity*, to be able to interpret his ideas in my dance.

ROSENGARTEN—It will be wonderful, I'm sure, and I'm longing to see you elucidate his celebrated passage that "Mass is variable with the condition and velocity of the observer."

MRS. PACKER—That's it! That's it! Mr. Cadman and I are the mass, and you are the velocity of the observer.

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ROSENGARTEN—If Einstein could only see it, Mrs. Packer!

MRS. PACKER—Yes, I'm sure he'd love it. And then you see, I thought it would please the Duchess, who owns Mervyn's greatest masterpiece, *Einstein's Relativity*.

ROSENGARTEN AND KOUGELMAN—[*In one breath.*] What a masterpiece!

MISS PACKER—I only wish father had bought it.

ROSENGARTEN—But, Miss Packer, your father has twenty beautiful Mervyns.

KOUGELMAN—[*Aside.*] And twenty more are waiting for him. [*Re-enter CADMAN in domino and head-dress. He casts a sheepish look at MISS PACKER.*]

MRS. PACKER—[*Briskly.*] Now, Mr. Cadman, we'll just go through it.

CADMAN—[*Apprehensively.*] I hope Mr. Packer is not going to object.

MRS. PACKER—[*Buoyantly.*] Object! What an idea! We'll have a tremendous success. [*Makes sign to orchestra leader in conservatory to begin.*] You can just start the music. [*The orchestra plays one of the very latest and most exquisite compositions by one of the "Great Six." The dancers face each other a few yards apart, then slowly advance, making grotesque and angular movements. MRS. PACKER places her hands on CADMAN's shoulders, and they revolve around together, swaying and rocking back and forth.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Aside to ROSENGARTEN.*] Do you see it too, or am I going mad?

MISS PACKER—[*Rather ashamed. Apologetically.*]

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You know, mother has been so insistent about this dance, but I'm sure father won't approve of it at all.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Repressing a smile.*] Muratori is certainly a very clever professor of dancing, but perhaps this will be over the heads of most people.

[*The dancers, now back to back, begin to bump each other's posteriors with increasing vigour, waving their arms like windmills, and rolling their heads around. Finally, after tiptoeing, gliding, and skipping about, while simulating, with inane gestures, fear, grief, mirth, etc., they entwine themselves in a long pink ribbon which CADMAN withdraws from his pocket. They remain face to face with arms uplifted and hands quivering. MRS. PACKER gazes with silly ecstasy into the eyes of her partner, who with a foolish self-conscious look returns her gaze.*]

PACKER—[*Who has been watching the last few minutes of the dance unobserved by all, now suddenly enters from conservatory, looking shocked and angry.*] Well, that's a pretty sight! What the devil do you think you're doing anyhow? And you, Cadman, do you take yourself for a maypole, or a quivering aspen leaf?

MRS. PACKER—[*In breathless agitation, unwinding herself from ribbon.*] Why, Ezra, this was to be a surprise for you! I didn't mean——

[ROSENGARTEN makes sign to KOUGELMAN, and they withdraw to conservatory with Semitic tact.]

PACKER—A lovely surprise, to see you quivering and shaking there like a jelly!

CADMAN—[*Confused and embarrassed.*] I'm sorry you're displeased, Mr. Packer, but—er——

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PACKER—[*Ignoring him.*] Patricia, I'm astonished to see you encouraging your mother to make such a consummate old goose of herself!

MISS PACKER—I told mother that you——

MRS. PACKER—[*Incensed.*] Old goose of myself! Why, I've been studying that dance for weeks with Signor Muratori, and just because you're incapable of understanding *Einstein's Relativity*, it's not my fault.

PACKER—[*With uproarious irony.*] Ha, ha! *Einstein's Relativity*! Suffering Jehoshaphat! So that's what you call your rockin' and rollin' and wallop in' about like an old sea-lion! And you meant to do that before our guests?

MRS. PACKER—You ought to be ashamed to talk to your wife like that, after all the trouble I've taken about this ball. A lot of help you've been! You first refuse to wear your helmet, and then say my dress, which cost two thousand dollars, is indecent.

PACKER—For that price, they should have given you more of it.

MRS. PACKER—[*Furious.*] And here you are now, spoiling my dance and the whole evening. I simply feel like going to bed, and leaving you to do the whole thing!

MISS PACKER—[*Looking round anxiously.*] Oh, mother, don't get excited! The guests will be arriving any minute.

PACKER—I would rather have you stay in bed than have you make such an exhibition of yourself.

MISS PACKER—[*Stamping her foot authoritatively.*] Now, father, do be quiet! You've said enough!

MRS. PACKER—[*Exploding.*] Your father is just a

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great big—big—big—heathen, and now I know he doesn't believe in Mamasism, or Art, or anything else!

MISS PACKER—[*Imploringly.*] Please, mother, please! Goodness! Here's the Duchess!

[DUCHESS *enters gaily, accompanied by VAN LOON. Both are wearing mauve dominos over their ballet costumes. VAN RENSSELAER-LEVINE-SON, KOUGELMAN and ROSENGARTEN follow. They are robed in violet silk, and wear Mamas helmets similar to that of PACKER.*]

DUCHESS—Well, here we all are, for the greatest Art event of the century. But what's the matter with Mrs. Packer?

MRS. PACKER—[*Trying to compose herself.*] Oh, nothing, nothing! Mr. Packer has been going for me about my dress.

DUCHESS—[*Endeavouring to conceal mirth.*] Your dress? Why, it's too beautiful! Isn't it beautiful, Van Rensselaer? It's Brunhilda! You're Brunhilda, Mrs. Packer.

LEVINESON—Superlative! [*Aside.*] Grotesque!

MRS. PACKER—[*Playing martyr.*] Mr. Packer says it's much too low and too short, and that I look like Mother Goose in it.

DUCHESS—[*Shaking finger at Mr. PACKER bewitchingly.*] Oh, Mr. Packer, you naughty man!

MRS. PACKER—And he refuses to wear his helmet, Duchess.

DUCHESS—Where is it? We'll just put it on his head right away.

MISS PACKER—[*Handing helmet to DUCHESS.*] Here it is, Gloria. He won't dare to refuse you!

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DUCHESS—See, Mr. Packer, how knightly Van Rensselaer and Normie are in theirs, and you'll out-shine them completely. [*Puts helmet on his head, with exaggerated admiration.*] Ah! now look at him! Isn't he superb, magnificent? Behold Ulysses! Sir Galahad! Siegfried!

PACKER—[*Succumbing to flattery.*] Ah, Duchess, you're a dangerous woman—a real Circe. [*Kissing her hand gallantly.*]

DUCHESS—Hear that! You must teach Van Rensselaer how to make compliments. [*Gazing around room.*] But how lovely the room looks! Oh! you've moved the Indians and the Virgin; they are much better there, Mr. Packer. Now, aren't you glad you bought them? And the Mervyns are beautifully placed. I recognize Mr. Rosengarten's hand.

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, I think everything looks very well for the ball, Duchess. But Mr. and Mrs. Packer have such understanding.

KOUGELMAN—We soon hope to see Mr. Packer with the finest private collection in the world.

PACKER—It's on the way——

KOUGELMAN—[*Aside.*] May God and the Kougelmans speed it!

DUCHESS—I'm so excited about our ballet! They ought to be here by now. Wait until you see Normie's costume! It's too marvellous! Now show yourself off, Normie.

VAN LOON—[*Opening his domino coyly.*] Well, I'll just let you have a peep.

EVERYBODY—Oh, how beautiful! lovely! marvellous! exquisite!

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Mrs. PACKER—[*Agitated.*] Oh, Ezra, they're arriving! Come quickly! Come, Patricia!

Miss PACKER—[*Impatiently.*] In a moment, mother!

[Mr. and Mrs. PACKER take up position near door to receive guests, who begin to arrive. The gentlemen wear regulation Mamas helmets and robes over evening dress. The ladies, in varied Mamas costumes, are resplendent and phantastic. The conceptions of some of the older ones are extremely risible and verge on the grotesque. The guests form little groups and interchange salutations. Orchestra plays. Numerous lackeys in knee-breeches, white stockings, and powdered hair are seen lined up in conservatory. Others pass to and fro. CADMAN flits back and forth among guests with an eye to everything.]

DUCHESS—You wouldn't believe how proud he is of his legs. And to think he's been hiding them from us for all these years! Look how jealous Van Rensselaer is! I'm sure he hasn't legs like that, or he wouldn't have refused to dance in the ballet.

LEVINESON—[*Piqued.*] Someone must be audience, you know.

DUCHESS—Imagine Van Rensselaer as audience, when he never listens to anyone but himself.

Miss PACKER—But then we're all so glad to listen to him, Gloria.

LEVINESON—Thank you, Miss Packer, for putting in a good word for me, as I rarely get a chance to put in a word for myself.

DUCHESS—Hear that! Isn't he rude? You might suppose I did all the talking. Mr. Rosengarten, is

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everything ready? There mustn't be a hitch, you know. I'm so afraid Normie will pop out of our subliminal silver egg too soon. He's become so vain, you know—so impossibly vain!

VAN LOON—Oh, Gloria, the idea of being alone with you in the silver egg of subconsciousness will be so enchanting that I may never become conscious again!

DUCHESS—Does that mean he may forget himself? Oh, how awfully exciting! Think of Normie forgetting himself! Has Mervyn come yet? It would be just like him to forget all about the ball, and not turn up at all. He's such a genius!

ROSENGARTEN—I've already foreseen that possibility, Duchess. Mr. Kougelman has just left to fetch him. His entrance in his white robes will be most effective.

MISS PACKER—Oh, I'm sure it will be perfectly marvellous, but I do wish he had deigned to come to the rehearsals.

DUCHESS—But, Patricia, you mustn't ever expect geniuses to rehearse. Geniuses never rehearse, you know.

ROSENGARTEN—Don't worry, Miss Packer. He'll know his part. I've explained it most carefully. [*Two ladies and several gentlemen approach who are to dance in the ballet. MISS PACKER joins her parents.*]

DUCHESS—Oh, but here's some of the ballet. Good evening! Good evening! Where are the others?

DEBUTANTE—[*Shuffling across the room, with a jazz wiggle. To DUCHESS in a drawling sing-song voice.*] E-v-e-n-i-n-g!

RAILROAD PRESIDENT—[*On the other side of room,*

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joining friend.] Well, Tom, you certainly look like a bird!

SPORTSMAN—Birds of a feather, you know.

RAILROAD PRESIDENT—[*Self-consciously adjusting his helmet.*] My missis put this swan on my head.

SPORTSMAN—Same here!

JUDGE—[*Joining group.*] Last winter, Dick, we were Blue Birds, and this winter I see we are “Mamas” birds.

RAILROAD PRESIDENT—Who knows what kind of birds we’ll be next winter!

SPORTSMAN—[*Nodding in the direction of a fat, flabby, effeminate-looking, middle-aged man with flaccid jowls.*] There’s the Editor of that tom-fool asinine journal, *Woman’s Supremacy*. The big fat stiff! I’d like to punch his face, damn him!

JUDGE—[*Laughing.*] It is a temptation. You know he now actually calls himself “Susan Timkins.”

RAILROAD PRESIDENT—You mean he signs his articles “Susan”?

JUDGE—Not a bit of it! He claims it’s barbaric to have sex differentiated by Christian names, and insists on being called “Susan.”

SPORTSMAN—Gawd, it’s idiotic! But, after all, I don’t see much difference. My spouse, who’s a high-brow, God bless her, calls herself, as you all know, “Patrick Odd.” It’s all right for—er—a—er—what do you call—em—*nom de plume* for her books, but now, by golly, everyone has to call her “Patrick”!

JUDGE—It’s certainly a topsy-turvy epoch. Lately my wife has taken to calling herself by her maiden name. You can imagine how that looks on hotel reg-

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isters. "Judge Hackett and Miss Nora Ibsen."
[*Laughter.*]

SPORTSMAN—[*To SENATOR, joining group.*] Hi, Senator! you look like the Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux.

SENATOR—[*Rather shame-faced.*] My missis toggled me out like this.

SPORTSMAN—Well, you're darned lucky if she stopped with the helmet. My Frau landed me with four of those Mervyn daubs, this afternoon!

JUDGE—[*With a gnostic patronizing smile.*] I congratulate you. Those Mervyns are wonderful works of art. My wife bought two at the opening of the Exhibition, and Van Rensselaer-Levineson, who is a great friend of ours, says she picked out two of the best.

SPORTSMAN—Seems to me a hell of a price for pictures of that size—ten thousand dollars or more! Why, it's more than you would have to cough up for a cracker-jack polo pony!

JUDGE—[*With wise judicial smile.*] They will probably be worth more than a good many polo ponies some day.

SENATOR—Well, one's my limit. I hear Packer's cornered the market on 'em.

RAILROAD PRESIDENT—I haven't been to the show yet, but I meant to go with my wife and Van Rensselaer-Levineson this afternoon.

SENATOR—All I can say is that I've been taken there three times by my "better half," but I'm none the wiser. She says there's no hope for me. [*Laughter.*] Judge, what's your idea about all this Mamas Art business?

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JUDGE—[*Flattered to be appealed to as Art connoisseur.*] It's a bit difficult to express in a few words, Senator, but Mervyn, who is the originator of it, is, to my mind, one of the most creative and constructive Art geniuses of the epoch.

DUCHESS—[*From other side of gallery, is centre of an animated group.*] Oh, goodness, don't say anything against Freud before Normie Van Loon! Freud is his household god; isn't he, Normie? Aren't you a worshipper of Freud?

VAN LOON—Now, Gloria!

DUCHESS—Even during the war he kept an enormous picture of him on his mantelpiece, and he psychoanalyses himself every morning; don't you, Normie?

VAN LOON—Gracious, Gloria, you'll have everyone thinking I'm a Bosch! [*Laughter.*] But how about your prophet, Karl Marx? The Duchess is a red Socialist, you know—in fact a real Communist.

A GENTLEMAN—I wish you would tell us, Duchess, about your experiences in Russia.

DUCHESS—Oh, you'll see it all in *The New Republic*. I'm writing for them, you know, in defence of Bolshevism.

DEBUTANTE—But didn't you nearly pass out when you met Lenin and Trotsky?

DUCHESS—Oh, what an idea! Lenin is the most charming man. And such a genius! And as for Trotsky, he's really too marvellous. He's our Napoleon of peace!

DEBUTANTE—I'll bet he's a corker all right.

DUCHESS—Of course they always called me "comrade." But one night—it was awfully funny—they were giving a banquet in the Kremlin, and the food was

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perfectly delicious—delicious—which sounds incredible, as the country was starving to death. I shall never forget it! Poor Trotsky forgot himself and called me “Duchess” before everyone, and darling Lenin nearly fainted with rage. [*All laugh.*]

VAN LOON—How humorous! How impossibly humorous!

DEBUTANTE—[*Giggling.*] Gee! that’s going some for a Red. He must have been gloriously soused. [*Laughter.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Coming up.*] Excuse me, Duchess, but it’s time for the ballet.

DUCHESS—Come, Normie! Call everybody.

[*Exit DUCHESS, followed by other members of the ballet. In centre of gallery LEVINESON is being lionized by a group of admiring ladies.*]

PATRICK ODD—But, Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson, wasn’t the Pope awfully upset when you told him his pet Botticelli wasn’t genuine?

LEVINESON—Oh, yes; but he was consoled later when I discovered that two exquisite little paintings of doubtful origin were by Piero di Cosimo.

PATRICK ODD—How clever!

LEVINESON—[*With a mental yawn.*] It must be an awful bore to be of doubtful origin.

A LADY—You know I’ve just finished your marvelous book on Mervyn. Don’t forget you promised to write in it.

MISS NORA IBSEN—I was simply thrilled by it, too! Your book on the Indians is my favourite, though.

A LADY—Do you think so? Mine is his Fra Angelico book: that’s too divine.

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LEVINESON—Well, on the whole, I'd rather make books than babies. [*Laughter.*]

A LADY—How refreshingly shocking! Now, dear Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson, when are you going to take me to the Exhibition? I'm afraid all the pictures will be gone before I'm able to get one.

LEVINESON—[*Suppressing a yawn.*] Any afternoon, dear lady!

PATRICK ODD—I'm perfectly enchanted with the four you selected with me yesterday; they are really jewels. My husband, of course, doesn't understand them, although he'd like to, poor dear.

LEVINESON—He will! He will! We must give the poor dear time, you know, Patrick. [*Laughter.*]

A LADY—I've tried to explain to my husband about Mamasism, and get him off the eternal subject of the Stock Market, but it's no use.

PATRICK ODD—Our American men are really such barbarians when it comes to Art.

LEVINESON—Oh! aren't you rather severe? I've met a fairly civilized one occasionally. [*Laughter.*]

MISS NORA IBSEN—Oh, you're too delicious!

PATRICK ODD—You do make me laugh!

A LADY—Oh! by the way, won't you all come to luncheon to-morrow? The Spanish Ambassador and one of his secretaries are coming, and we'll have a civilized conversation for a change.

MISS NORA IBSEN—No husbands allowed! They're bad enough in winter, but odious in spring.

LEVINESON—The springtime is an ominous moment for them, Miss Ibsen.

PATRICK ODD—Why the springtime, particularly?

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LEVINESON—Don't you know?

"The Cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
Cuckoo, Cuckoo!—Oh, word of fear!
Unpleasing to a married ear!"

A LADY—[*Delighted.*] Oh, what a naughty little verse! Is it yours?

LEVINESON—Thank you, dear lady. You're all so delightfully and refreshingly ignorant. I was merely quoting Shakespeare.

A LADY—[*Disconcerted.*] Of course, how dull of us! It's in his sonnets. I'll expect you all, then!

LEVINESON—Yes! What fun! I haven't met the Ambassador, but the King of Spain is a dear friend of mine.

A LADY—[*Pointedly.*] And of course I'll ask the Duchess of Mandelieu too.

LEVINESON—But don't drag in old Van Loon, he's such a bore.

[*The orchestra abruptly stops playing soft waltz music and the ballet is heralded by the rolling of drums and bugle calls. The guests seat themselves amid murmurs of anticipation. Throughout the ballet there are bursts of applause and exclamations of appreciation. Lights are lowered and bluish spot-lights are thrown on the first couple, representing SENSE OF TOUCH, who appear in the large doorway right.*

Both are phantastically dressed, wearing silver skull-caps, from which project long antennæ. The man wears purple tights. A tuft of black and

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white feathers, resembling a cock's tail, is held in place by a jewelled belt. On his feet are long pointed cerise shoes. In his ears are emeralds, with which his hands are also covered. The woman is dressed in mauve and green. Her skirt is short, her bodice extremely low, her legs are bare, and on her feet are black velvet slippers with green heels. She is covered with jewels. They pirouette about, seeking to touch each other lightly with finger-tips and antennæ.

The second couple, representing SENSE OF TASTE, follow. The man wears yellow tights spotted with black and is girdled with orange feathers. She is dressed in yellow, orange and gold, and carries a long slender golden pitcher, from which she affects to pour wine into her partner's golden goblet. Both are wreathed in autumn leaves and grapes.

The third couple, representing SENSE OF SIGHT, are arrayed in green and blue and crowned with peacock feather eyes on slender stems. The man has a spreading tail of peacock feathers. Her tail is furled and sweeps the ground. Her breasts are covered with metal disks, inlaid with emeralds and sapphires. They both appear with black bandages over their eyes, and after groping about, finally meet, untie each other's bandages, and then cavort about in delight.

The fourth pair, wreathed in flowers and symbolizing SENSE OF SMELL, are dressed in pinks and mauves, with pale green stockings. They carry large exotic flowers in their hands and swoon in

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ecstasy while inhaling the perfume therefrom. They terminate their round in a dance of sensuous joy.

The fifth couple, representing SENSE OF HEARING, are dressed in blue and mauve. On their wrists and ankles are little tinkling silver bells, and on their heads are swung half hoops of bells. The man blows a few notes on a long silver reed-like flute. The woman listens with her hand to her ear and flutters to him, shaking her bells, after which they twirl about together.

When a couple has executed their figure they stand to one side while the following couple dances. After the five couples have made their entrance they all tiptoe together to the back of the room, and from behind a violet curtain, which has been drawn across the entrance during the dance, they pull forward, by silver chains, an enormous "Mamas" bird, mounted on small golden wheels, carrying on its back a great silver egg.

The couples form a circle and dance about the egg. Each dancer then grasps a silver ribbon which is attached to the top of the egg, and as they pull simultaneously the upper part of the egg falls apart in ten sections, revealing VAN LOON and the DUCHESS entwined together under a mass of white feathers and shimmering silver veils. The dancers prostrate themselves around the egg, while the DUCHESS and VAN LOON slowly, and languidly, come to life and emerge from it together.

They are both exquisitely dressed in silver span-

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gles and diamonds, with crests of white plumes on their heads.

VAN LOON's neck is bare. His arms are covered with long white kid gloves. He wears garters, bracelets, and earrings of diamonds, and his white tail feathers trail behind him on the ground like a pheasant. The DUCHESS wears a silver-spangled robe. A long court train in silver cloth, embroidered with a Mamas bird, hangs from her shoulders. Her high-heeled slippers sparkle with diamonds. Their costumes are colourless save for two vermilion triangles over their hearts.

They step out of the egg, exchange cabalistic signs, assume Mamasist poses, and then touch with their wands the heads of the prostrate dancers, causing each dancer to rise in turn. The gentlemen now form a line to right, the ladies to left, between which the DUCHESS and VAN LOON walk majestically to the great doorway and again draw the curtains aside, revealing MERVYN, who appears like a prophet, robed in simple white draperies. His neck is bare and on his feet are sandals. His head is wreathed with white jasmine.

The limelight is thrown on MERVYN alone. He remains immovable for a few seconds and then slowly advances through the two lines of dancers. ROSENGARTEN at this moment steps forward and conducts him to one of the four great gold chairs reserved for him between MRS. PACKER and the MAYOR OF NEW YORK.

As soon as MERVYN is seated, PACKER steps to platform and opens the ceremonies. He clears his

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*throat, with the self-assurance of a master of industry, glances about the room and, with impressive voice, begins:*¹

PACKER: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—We have with us this evening a most honoured guest who needs no introduction, for his glorious record of self-sacrifice, altruistic endeavour, charitable effort and exalted regard for justice, truth and the public welfare is emblazoned on the golden tablets of our city. I present to you an ardent patriot, an upholder of civilization,

¹ On re-reading the above suggestions for the ballet, I find them not only ludicrously old-fashioned and out of date, but reactionary to the last degree. In them there are no tooting taxi horns, jingling telephone bells, siren factory whistles, scraping metallic gramophones, roaring aeroplanes, automatic riveters and other inspiring symphonies of the grinding, crashing machinery so dear to the modern progressive democratic ear.

The dancers, too, are unmechanized and do not endeavour to simulate motor cars and aeroplanes and coast about on their stomachs, or slide around on their posteriors as they did in the Dadaist ballet which was recently given in Paris by world-famous magazine and newspaper artists to a world-famous magazine and newspaper public.

As I feel, therefore, the possibilities of this Mamasist ballet entirely surpass my imagination, I suggest having it staged and carried out by super-modern masters of super-modern art. Eric Sati, Ford and Crane (the world-famous plumber) might compose the ballet music, assisted by the "Great Six." Stravinsky, H. G. Wells (the noble labourite), Loyal Painless Thompson and Babe Ruth might conduct the orchestra. The costumes could be designed by selected members of the Saloon of French Independents, and the management and general decoration could be undertaken by Bellock Stardale and the Committee of American Artists who organized the Armoury Art Circus of 1912, with a crashing brass band, newspaper ring-masters, "arty" clowns, con-tortionist critics, floor-walking art boosters and pathological side-shows of "ists" and "isms."

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progress¹ and true democracy—His Honour the Mayor of New York! [*Loud applause.* PACKER bows to the MAYOR and with a gesture invites him to mount the platform from which he has descended.]

MAYOR—[*Speaking from platform with all the gusto and sentimental fulsomeness of the successful political bell-wether.*] LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—We are assembled here this evening in this superb and sumptuous palace to offer up our tribute to Art and do honour to a world-renowned genius who has brought to us, through his inspired vision, the sunlight of European thought and culture. It is by such higher understanding and spiritual sympathy, which constitute practical idealism, that countries become united in sacred and indissoluble bonds of love and friendship. Even as a child my dream was to become some day a servant of the people and a knight-errant of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," those three radiant, triumphant sisters of holy democracy, in whose eyes blaze the divine light of altruism, humility, self-sacrifice, from whose lips drop pearls of wisdom, rubies of truth, glittering diamonds of eternal justice, and whose sainted brows are encircled by golden wreaths of progress. [*Great applause.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Aside to KUGELMAN.*] Before our Mayor became shepherd of New York he must have been a jeweller.

¹ Mr. Galton, the distinguished anthropologist, states: "It follows from all this that the average ability of the Athenian race is, on the lowest possible estimate, very nearly two grades higher than our own; that is, about as much as our race is above that of the African negro." Ezra P., Henry Ford and Mayor Sweeney would undoubtedly consider this statement "rotten bunk."

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MAYOR—[*Swelling with self-importance and flushing with gratified vanity, he addresses MERVYN histrionically.*] You, Mr. Mervyn, are also serving the people, and with your paint brush dipped in sunbeams give them the beauty for which their spirits hunger. Did not Christ say: "Man cannot live by bread alone"? Although my public duties are exacting and arduous, I nevertheless found time, or, rather, my wife and daughter, who are art lovers and among your most ardent admirers, found time for me to visit your unique exhibition at the Kougelman Galleries. It is owing to their feminine intuition and delicate perception that I am now more fully able to appreciate the subtle intricacies of Mamasist art, which has inspired in me a still deeper sense of service for the cause of right, which is the might of the plain people. *Vox populi, vox Dei!* For is not true art, in the words of one who was one hundred—nay, one thousand—per cent. American: "Of the people, for the people, and by the people"? [*Cheers and prolonged applause.*]

DUCHESS—Bravo, your Honour! Magnificent! Bravo, cousin!

VAN LOON—Hear, hear!

MAYOR—[*Making a sign to MRS. PACKER, who steps forward and presents to him a red velvet cushion, on which is a small gold key.*] Mr. Mervyn, I now have the honour to present to you the liberty of our great city of New York [*Taking key from cushion*], of which this little gold key is the symbol. I may add that you will have no need of it to unlock our hearts or imaginations, which have already been unlocked by the vital beauty and luminous sanity of your masterpieces.

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[Amid tremendous and sustained applause, he descends from the platform, and hands the key to MERVYN, who accepts it with a profound bow. The MAYOR seats himself, while MERVYN, guided by ROSENGARTEN, who has remained watchfully at his elbow, ascends platform in midst of expectant and awed hush. Lights are lowered, and limelight is thrown on him. He stands impassive, his eyes fixed on ROSENGARTEN, who, holding MERVYN's gaze, withdraws to a certain distance behind guests, where he remains standing. He then sympathetically and suggestively nods MERVYN into beginning his speech, which he does in a low monotonous voice, as if he were reciting a lesson under hypnotic control.]

MERVYN: FRIENDS,—The only possibility I have of expressing my overflow of gratitude to you, Mr. Mayor, for your most gracious speech, and for all the honours I have received since my arrival in this great and glorious country, is through my painting. If I am able to unlock with this little gold key another secret door leading into ever-deepening mysteries of Art, I shall not have received it in vain, although Art is but an approach to the impossible. In his earliest day-dreams the artist instinctively knows that he has chosen the steepest, most solitary, and most dangerous path—a path which differs from all others, in that it is without resting-place, guide or goal, and that his only compensation can be found in the pangs and joys of creation. Other men may be judged by their ability and success in skilfully penetrating a difficult or an easy close, but the artist aims at an ever-receding goal, and if he be judged at all, it must be by his poetical effort of approach to the unattainable. A vital difference

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between the painter and the artist is that the painter expresses what you have seen, while the artist creates what you have not seen. The painter intensifies your consciousness, the artist illuminates your subconsciousness, your sixth sense, or "Mamas." The Hindoo philosophers. . . . The Hindoo philosophers . . . philosophers . . . philoso . . . [*He suddenly stops, puts both hands to his head, and cries out in a terrified voice.*] I've forgotten it! I've forgotten the rest! [*He stares wildly around room, and on seeing statue of Virgin implores her piteously, with outstretched arms.*] Oh, Marie! Marie, help me! help me to remember it. And why do they call me Mervyn? My name is John Brown, and I'm not a genius, I'm a poor fool, a poor fool! [*He then drops to his knees, and covering his face with his hands begins to sob violently. KOU- GELMAN, who has been standing near ROSENGARTEN, breathlessly following MERVYN's speech, while mopping his brow in great agitation and trembling with nervous apprehension, suddenly collapses unnoticed into a chair. In the midst of the hubbub and general consternation he groans aloud.*]

KOUGELMAN—We're lost! I knew it would happen; I foresaw it all. We're lost—lost!

ROSENGARTEN—[*Who has remained perfectly calm, looks quickly from MERVYN to KOU- GELMAN. He hesitates a moment, and then with a sudden flash of inspiration seizes KOU- GELMAN by the arm with a quick determined gesture.*] Be quiet, you fool! Leave it to me. Get everyone out! Tell them he's gone mad. Mad!—do you hear? It's all right! Get up! Pull yourself together. [*He shakes him violently by the arm* 238

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and jerks him to his feet. He then quickly walks to the platform, where MERVYN is surrounded by the PACKERS, the DUCHESS, VAN LOON and others, who are trying to console him. From platform, addressing guests.] It would be better for everyone to leave the room immediately. Mr. Mervyn must be left alone. The strain has been too great. It's a mental breakdown. [To MRS. PACKER and the DUCHESS.] Don't you see? He's gone mad! Get them all out! Leave me alone with him. Be quick!

[Room quickly empties amid exclamations: How awful! Terrible! What a tragedy! A calamity!]

DUCHESS—[Hastening everyone out.] He's gone mad! Quick, quick, we must all leave! He must be left alone. How appalling! [Leading MRS. PACKER, who is dazed and weeping.] Poor Mrs. Packer, how awful for you! Our wonderful Mervyn! It's incredible! Our genius gone mad!

MRS. PACKER—It's too dreadful!—too dreadful! Oh! I feel so faint. [She totters from room supported by DUCHESS, VAN LOON and MR. PACKER. KOUGELMAN and ROSENGARTEN are left alone with MERVYN, who has remained kneeling on platform.]

ROSENGARTEN—[Patting MERVYN gently and tenderly on head.] What's the matter, dear boy? Don't cry! It's all right! Everything is all right!

MERVYN—[Uncovering his face and with subsiding sobs.] You won't scold me, then? You're not angry?

ROSENGARTEN—[Helping him to his feet.] Scold you! Why, no, my dear child! You know I'm always kind to you. I never scold you.

MERVYN—[Piteously.] That's why I hated to for-

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get. I wanted to please you so much. I wanted to please you.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Leading him to a chair.*] Come and sit down over here. There! Now it's all right. You must forget all about it. It makes no difference. [*Again patting him on head affectionately.*] No difference at all, my dear child.

KOUGELMAN—[*Deathly white, with staring eyes and spluttering with emotion, frantically grasps ROSENGARTEN by the arm and pulls him to one side.*] My God! It's ghastly! Terrible! They've now seen he's a fool, and that we've tricked them. We're ruined! Lost! Lost!

ROSENGARTEN—[*With explosive cheerfulness.*] Lost! Why, Mervyn has solved the situation for us! The world will simply think he's gone insane. We'll put him in a sanatorium, and his unsold pictures will be worth three times as much. [*Slapping him vigorously on back.*] Why, you old goose, don't you see? We've won!

KOUGELMAN—[*Completely dazed.*] Won?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Triumphantly.*] Yes—won!

CURTAIN

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ACT IV

The following day, about 4 P.M., in a private sanatorium in the suburbs of New York.

A spacious airy room, with walls tinted pale grey.

In rear, a door and large window open on to garden, giving one a glimpse of valetudinarian trees. Near the window is a scraggy, sapless lilac bush which is still endeavouring to produce a few pale anæmic blooms. Farther on are narrow paths meagrely bordered with sooty crocuses and hyacinths imprisoned behind intercrossed iron hoops. There is an arid central plot, in the middle of which is a large plaque bearing the traditional device: "Keep off the grass." Not even the most democratic lunatic has ever been known to transgress this cast-iron rule of the asylum.

A white lacquered bed with brass trimmings extends into room with head-post against middle of left wall. Alongside bed stands a small white lacquered night table, on which is an electric lamp with paper shade on swivel.

At foot of bed is a large square table covered by green and white plaid oil-cloth.

To the right is a door leading into hall, a steam radiator, a sofa, and several comfortable chairs covered with washable chintz slips.

There is not a straight architectural line in the room, as the corners, cornices, door-frames and wainscotings have all been rounded off. The room, in fact, is perfectly hygienic, with its enamelled

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walls, bare floors, tub-rugs, and germ-proof corners.

The only ornament in the room is the radiator, which has been decorated with "arty" scroll-work and has gilded feet "suggesting a spiffy atmosphere of high breeding."

It is just the kind of room that any good modern democratic scientist would choose for his sterilized honeymoon.

Before curtain rises, a long low weeping moan is heard, answered by sardonic laughter.

As curtain rises, HEAD DOCTOR enters from hall door, right, followed by INTERNE. They are both in white jackets. HEAD DOCTOR is about fifty, wears glasses, is clean-shaven, sallow, and has the skin of a dried apple. He fiddles continually with his eye-glasses, either adjusting them or wiping them with his handkerchief after heavily breathing on them. During this performance he blinks and squints after the manner of near-sighted people.

Although not unsympathetic, he affects one, like so many professional American men, as being sexless. It would be difficult to think of him in the rôle of a son or husband or father.

Probably from having been surrounded for so long by pathological cases, he scrutinizes everyone suspiciously, as if seeking to detect and classify their particular variety of obsession or mania.

The only secret of his life is behind a Yale lock in his fourth bureau drawer.

On his last holiday trip to Europe, about eight months previous to opening of Act, he bought,

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while in Paris, a pornographic book entitled Fannie's Confessions, and he acquired at the same time a number of photographs of nude women in various poses, grasping riding whips. These, with the Confessions, he occasionally withdraws, when he is quite alone, from the fourth bureau drawer.

The INTERNE is a healthy vigorous-looking young man, of about twenty-seven, of Danish extraction, with rosy baby face, empty blue eyes, and wavy blond hair. He has the buoyant, confident, self-satisfied manner of one who has never suffered or been affected by the suffering of others.

His greatest enjoyments in life are baseball games, jazzing, cinema, and practical jokes.

Although both he and the HEAD DOCTOR are mentally alert and highly intelligent, one feels, nevertheless, that there is something abnormal, something lacking, about them.

It may come as a rather surprising observation, but the vast majority of American men, especially those in science, impress me as suffering from various forms of arrested development as far as the worth-while things of life are concerned.

INTERNE—Yes, it was Mr. Rosengarten himself who telephoned—you know, of Kougelman Art Galleries. Wanted one of the best rooms in the sanatorium for a friend.

HEAD DOCTOR—This room ought to do. He didn't explain case, I suppose?

INTERNE—No. He merely said it was sudden mental breakdown.

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HEAD DOCTOR—Kougelman Galleries? Isn't that where the famous Exhibition has been going on?

INTERNE—Yep—Mervyn, and all that Mamas new art truck-muck; it's created a tremendous hullabaloo in the Press.

HEAD DOCTOR—The latest fad, I suppose. I haven't followed it.

INTERNE—There are enormous head-lines about it again this evening in connection with the Packer ball. [*Taking paper from his pocket.*] Here, want to see it?

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Unfolding paper.*] Packer ball? I should say so! There's nothing else.

INTERNE—I haven't had time to read it; what's it all about?

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Reading head-lines.*] “World-famous Artist goes Mad at Packer Ball.” “Mervyn, Creator of Mamasist Art, raves before Brilliant Gathering.” “Gorgeous Pageant turns to Tragedy.” “Guests leave in Dismay.” “All New York Society present.”

INTERNE—Say, Doc., I bet this room is for Mervyn—

HEAD DOCTOR—Possibly. .[*Continuing to read.*] “Last night in Mr. Ezra P. Packer's magnificent new palace on Fifth Avenue, where the super-élite of New York society had been invited to a ball in honour of Mr. Mervyn—the most celebrated and universally discussed artist in the world, who has revolutionized Art on both Continents—a poignant and most dramatic tragedy took place. Just after a gorgeous ballet, rivaling in splendour *The Arabian Nights*, in which the brilliant and beautiful Duchess of Mandelieu, patron of

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the Arts and Sciences, foremost leader of American and European society, war heroine, and one of the most distinguished *littérateurs* of the day, took the leading part . . ." and so on, and so on . . . "Hindoo philosopher"—Oh, here we are: "Suddenly the great artist falters, turns deathly pale, and raising his arms in supplication to a beautiful Cinque Cento statue of the Virgin, which had recently been acquired for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars by Mr. Packer, cries out in anguish: 'Oh, Mary! Mary! help me! save me!' He then falls to his knees and, hiding his face in his hands, bursts into heart-rending sobs, while moaning out piteously that his name is John Brown and not Mervyn, and that he is only a poor fool and not a genius. The terrified guests withdraw in panic. Mrs. Packer, resplendent in her marvellous Mamasist costume and wearing her celebrated emeralds, is carried unconscious from the room. The situation is saved by the Duchess of Mandelieu," and so on, and so on—there are pages and pages of it. Well, it looks like a clear case of "manic-depressive." At any rate, if this room is for Mervyn, it will be a change to have a genius here thinking himself a fool. [*Returning paper, strolls into garden.*]

INTERNE—Sure! There are enough fools thinking themselves geniuses all right. [*Lights cigarette, and glances through paper.*] It must have been darned dramatic. He's not a bad-looking guy in this photograph. "Duchess of Mandelieu in Mamasist costume." Gosh! the notoriety that dame has. She's in every magazine and newspaper in the country. She's a good looker all right, Jewish type; clever bunch, the Jews.

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[*Turns over page.*] There's practically nothing else in the paper; four full pages about this ball. Gawd! I wish I'd had a look-in. Must have been a hell of a show! What's this? "The renowned scientist, Professor Percival Pinchum, buries pet cat in same grave as wife." Spoofle! "By special cable from London: Eddie de Witt, American sportsman of international repute, organizes cockroach races in London. Favourite sport of English aristocracy. Cockroaches wear owners' colours. Huge bets made on results." One, two, three, four, five of it! How the devil can they pull five columns out of that? [*Turning over another page.*] "Canary's white coffin. All Tuxedo society turns out as mourners, with brass band, for Mrs. Marmaduke de Wilberforce's celebrated song bird 'Bertie.'" Gee! what piffle! "Mr. Herman Goldstein of Middleburg, New York, known from coast to coast as the owner of 'Alice G.,' the fastest trotting mare in the world, advertises for live wire pastor with 'pep.'" "Sex changed by modern science." "Mr. Alexander Dupont, world-renowned altruist and philanthropist, offers himself to science to be transformed into woman by the wonder serum, with which the celebrated genius, Professor Siegfried Liebeskind, has already induced a hen to grow cock's plumage, and a female frog to become the father of a family." That's going some! Another page of the Winterbottom divorce. Poor old Winterbottom has been getting a page of this every day for over two months. We'll soon see Mrs. Winterbottom in the "movies" as heroine of her own domestic scandals. Anything to be in the limelight and get your

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mug in the papers! They'll advertise their vices, tears, and even their dishonour, to be jawed about.

HENRY MULLER—[*Who thinks himself "Loyal Painless Thompson," appears in garden window. He is an enormously fat, flabby, middle-aged man, with old-fashioned side-whiskers. On his head he wears a tremendous pill, on which is painted, "We work while you dream." The pill is held in place by bright green ribbons tied under his chin in a huge bow-knot. Around his neck is suspended a large plaque on which is painted, in glaring red letters, "Loyal Painless Thompson's luscious little lollipops for lazy languid livers."*] Cuckoo!

INTERNE—[*Looking up from paper.*] Ah, Mr. Muller!

MULLER—[*Slightly annoyed and surprised.*] Mr. Who?

INTERNE—Oh, excuse me, I mean Mr. Thompson, of course.

MULLER—[*Satisfied.*] Ah! I've just written an exquisite little eclogue; wouldn't you like to hear it?

INTERNE—I'm rather busy just now.

MULLER—It won't take a minute! I'm sure you'll love it. [*Quickly taking poem, written on big sheet of paper, from his pocket, and pursing his lips with euphuistic enjoyment, he begins to read:*]

MY PILL IN SPRINGTIME

Heigh-ho, Cuckoo, Cuckoo!
When lovers hear the Cuckoo trill
In the springtime,
In the ringtime,

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They think he's calling to his mate;
But if I must the truth relate,
 He's calling from a shady rill
 For "Loyal Thompson's" little pill.
 Hey nonino then, why be ill?
For here's a "Thompson's" liver pill!
 Heigh-ho, Cuckoo, Cuckoo!

The lambs do gambol on the hill
 In the springtime,
 In the ringtime.
On the green sward by the river,
Fancies flit 'twixt love and liver.
 In yellow beds of daffodil
 Let swain and lass caress at will;
 But lovers should not wed, until
They take a "Thompson's" liver pill.
 Heigh-ho, Cuckoo, Cuckoo!

INTERNE—Splendid, Mr. Thompson! That's hot stuff.

MULLER—It's Elizabethan in sentiment, isn't it?

INTERNE—Quite! it's so merry and blithesome, and I particularly like those lines:

 "On the green sward by the river
 Fancies flit 'twixt love and liver."

MULLER—[*Puffing with naïve pride.*] Yes, it was a happy inspiration. [*Eagerly drawing another large paper from his pocket.*] But I have another poem here, which I think you'll like even better, entitled *Liver, Life-Giver*. [*Door on right is suddenly opened, and HEAD DOCTOR ushers in ROSENGARTEN.*]

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HEAD DOCTOR—We thought this room might do, Mr. Rosengarten.

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, it seems pleasant and cheerful.

HEAD DOCTOR—It has a southern exposure, and opens onto the garden.

MULLER—[*Still at window.*] Good evening, gentlemen. I was about to read my latest poem, *Liver, Life-Giver*. Shall I begin?

INTERNE—[*Who has quickly walked into garden.*] Come and read it to me in the garden, Mr. Thompson. [*He takes him gently by the arm, and leads him away.*]

MULLER—[*Being led off reluctantly.*] But I'm sure these gentlemen would like to hear it. [*They withdraw arm in arm.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Smiling.*] Who is Mr. Thompson, Doctor?

HEAD DOCTOR—Oh, he's one of our patients. He believes himself to be "Loyal Painless Thompson" of Liver Pill fame. His real name is Muller.

ROSENGARTEN—That's rather an odd illusion, isn't it?

HEAD DOCTOR—No; it may seem so, but when these cases are traced a posteriori, they become quite comprehensible.

ROSENGARTEN—May I ask how that poor fellow came to believe himself "Loyal Painless Thompson"?

HEAD DOCTOR—Does it really interest you?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Sitting down and offering DOCTOR a cigarette.*] Immensely, Doctor!—especially since poor Mervyn's breakdown.

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Sitting down also.*] Well, Muller was a writer of considerable promise, I believe, and out of the earnings of his first successful book he built himself a very attractive little house in the suburbs. From

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what I heard, he put heart, soul and most of his money into it. One day he woke up to find an enormous billboard advertising "Loyal Painless Thompson's luscious little lollipops" blotting out his entire view.

ROSENGARTEN—By Jove! that was hard luck.

HEAD DOCTOR—Wasn't it? He then brought a lawsuit to have the sign removed, which he lost, of course, on the grounds of interfering with commerce and progress. After that he brooded and worried so much over it all, he became neurasthenic, and finally entirely unbalanced.

ROSENGARTEN—Poor chap! And now he thinks he's "Loyal Painless Thompson"? What a fate! What cruel irony!

HEAD DOCTOR—Yes; and spends his day writing poems to advertise the very pill that was his undoing.

ROSENGARTEN—Fortunately he seems quite gay and happy.

HEAD DOCTOR—He is, unless you happen to mention Carter.

ROSENGARTEN—You mean the other pill man—his rival, I suppose? [*A mocking sinister laugh is heard from without.*] Your patients seem pretty cheerful here, Doctor.

HEAD DOCTOR—Oh, that's our Devil laughing!

ROSENGARTEN—What makes him laugh?—has he ever told you?

HEAD DOCTOR—He's most amusing at times. He says he laughs at humanity for working its way into Hell, when it could be playing its way into Heaven.

ROSENGARTEN—A clever devil, that! I suppose many of your patients suffer from religious mania?

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HEAD DOCTOR—No. On the contrary, we have only two theomaniacs: that one who thinks he's the Devil, and another who thinks he's God; but they're altogether old-fashioned and out of date. Insanity no longer manifests itself in forms of religious fanaticism, but in what might be called Press Deliria and Bill-board Dementia.

ROSENGARTEN—There are fashions in insanity too, then?

HEAD DOCTOR—Why, yes! Cæsars and Napoleons, for instance, and Emperors and Queens, have entirely disappeared from our asylums. We haven't had a Christ or a Virgin Mary for years.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Amused.*] What's the latest fashion now, Doctor?

HEAD DOCTOR—Well, we have a Mr. Wanamaker, a Ford, a Lady Astor, Baby Cadum, Gillette, Dempsey, and, among others, a sweet little old lady who thinks she's Clare Sheridan and that Trotsky brought about the Russian revolution for love of her.

ROSENGARTEN—Ah, I see! All bill-board and newspaper celebrities.

HEAD DOCTOR—Entirely so! It will probably amuse you to hear that our last two patients call themselves Babe Ruth and Mrs. Asquith.

ROSENGARTEN—I should think you would have a number of Charlie Chaplins and Mary Pickfords too.

HEAD DOCTOR—But we have; there are already three Charlies and two Marys.

ROSENGARTEN—I've never thought before how much the age reacts on various manifestations of insanity.

HEAD DOCTOR—My patients are merely the patho-

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logical result of commercial advertisement and a press-ridden, bill-boarded world.

ROSENGARTEN—Naturally, when you come to think of it, religious mania could only have happened in a religious age, when there was belief; but now that religion is dead, and Royalty is looked upon as a farce, the feeble-minded become obsessed by what is constantly suggested to them. Even the strongest of us are caught more or less, I suppose. In fact, if I'm not mistaken—[*Pointing to DOCTOR's shoes.*] Aren't those Douglas shoes you're wearing?

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Laughing.*] And may I congratulate you, Mr. Rosengarten, on your "Save tie, time, and temper Slidewell collar"?

ROSENGARTEN—It's an "Arrow." [DOCTOR *laughs.*]

HEAD DOCTOR—But to continue what we were saying. I've often wondered why we have no Lloyd Georges or Wilsons here.

ROSENGARTEN—Ah, but, Doctor, not even the feeble-minded take them over-seriously. It's the same in all decadent ages. When Rome began to degenerate, the idols of the people were gladiators, charioteers and public entertainers. [*A long moaning wail of despair is heard from without.*] That's God, I suppose?

HEAD DOCTOR—Yes, weeping, as he says, for the dreadful botch he made of humanity.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Who has walked to window, looks into garden.*] Goodness! who's that out there in a frock coat and top hat? He looks like a wedding guest, in his white spats and enormous white boutonnière.

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Glancing out of window.*] Oh, that is the Rev. Simpkin-Sands. He thinks he's Mr. Wana-

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maker! Shall I call him in? He might interest you—à propos of our conversation.

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, do! He imagines this is the “Wanamaker emporium,” I suppose?

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Calling out.*] Mr. Wanamaker! Do come in and meet a friend of mine, who finds your shop marvellous.

A MAN’S VOICE—[*In distance.*] With pleasure.

HEAD DOCTOR—He used to be a fashionable clergyman from Philadelphia. I’ll see if I can’t get him to spout one of his biblical speeches.

THE REV. SIMPKIN-SANDS—[*A man of about fifty, enters room with “pom-pomposity,” and shakes hands with ROSENGARTEN. He is not only “gotten up” like a wedding guest, but, in the language of our smart social weeklies, like a bridegroom of “assured social position.”*] You have come, sir, at a very opportune moment, as we are selling to-day, regardless of cost. Our prices have been cut in half, and less than half.

ROSENGARTEN—How lucky for me, Mr. Wanamaker!

HEAD DOCTOR—Mr. Wanamaker, have you prepared your Sunday’s sermon yet of sales and special bargains?

SIMPKIN-SANDS—I was just pondering over it in the garden, while listening to our magnificent organ.

ROSENGARTEN—It’s so inspiring, Mr. Wanamaker, to listen to Bach or Wagner while selecting one’s winter underwear, or while buying a coal-scuttle or a canary!

SIMPKIN-SANDS—Your appreciation is most gratifying. I installed the organ in my great cathedral of commerce to give the proper religious atmosphere.

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HEAD DOCTOR—But your sermon for next Sunday, Mr. Wanamaker?

SIMPKIN-SANDS—Be seated, gentlemen, in the pew yonder. [*With a majestic gesture he waves them to the sofa with a madman's conviction that it is a pew. He begins to speak with the rising and falling inflection of a fashionable High-Church clergyman delivering his sermon.* ROSENGARTEN and DOCTOR obediently seat themselves on sofa.] “The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. My beloved is mine, in ‘envelope chemise of lemon Canton crêpe,’ and I am hers in ‘mercerized Shantung Billieburke pyjamas.’ I will arise now and go about the city in the streets in ‘delux satinette pantalettes, doubled to the hip and shadow-proof’; and in the broadways I will seek him whom my soul loveth, in his ‘Society Brand Form fitting Suit at 44 dollars 49.’

“How fair art thou, O love for delights, in thy modish ‘Sumptuous Six’ road-idyl comfort car, with tilted cushions, sun visor, windshield wiper and dome of heaven light.

“I sleep but my heart waketh in my ‘347 dollar Louis Quinze four-piece suite’ and gaze with rapture at my ‘33 dollar 99 chifforobe reduced from 47 dollars 50,’ in which are my beloved’s ‘chic Duchess Mоторо suitings, Marchioness step-in drawers and smart Baroness tub-skirts.’

“I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye buy ‘Alaska-made, Polar Bear Ascetic Refrigerators, side-

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icer, which savour of æsthetic discrimination and carry patrician distinction.'

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after 'Utopian Bath-tubs, Paradise Lavatories, and Nirvana Silentiums' in plumbing sanctuaries, wherein is enthroned King Solomon, in a 'gleaming luxite breakfast coat with Nile-green ruffings of self-material at 39 dollars 93.'

"Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe upon the mountain of spices, in 'our Slenderizing fashions for stout ladies, and our new self-reducing Corsetette with the favoured low bust and elastic insert, made of flesh broché and orchid satin.'" [*He stops, as though finishing a sermon, bows his head, clasps his hands in silent prayer, and then, with his eyes cast to Heaven, continues.*] "Let us all join in singing Hymn No. 535." [*He begins to sing.*]

 "Now the day is over,
 Night is drawing nigh;
 Shadows of the evening
 Steal across the sky;
 Comfort every sufferer
 Watching late in pain;
 Those who plan some evil
 From their sins restrain."

[*After the first two lines he turns about and with a slow swinging gait disappears into garden, singing the while. His voice gradually fades away. The DOCTOR and ROSENGARTEN continue in silence to exchange glances of surprised amusement. Door is suddenly opened by*

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INTERNE. DUCHESS enters, holding large teak-wood box tied with yellow cords and tassels. She is followed by VAN LOON, carrying bowl of gold-fish, and LEVINESON, with nightingale in cage. INTERNE leaves room, after whispering few words to DOCTOR.]

DUCHESS—[*In suppressed voice.*] May we come in? How is he? Has he arrived yet?

ROSENGARTEN—Oh, Duchess, how kind of you to come! No, Mr. Kougelman is bringing him; they'll be here any moment now.

DUCHESS—[*Resuming natural voice.*] We've just come from Wanamaker's with these presents for him. What a wonderful shop! Why, it's a cathedral of commerce!—with a marvellous organ playing Bach, and ascetic, priest-like floor-walkers bowing you into a paradise of lights, and colours, and everything imaginable. I made Van Rensselaer buy a nightingale. Mr. Van Loon's idea was gold-fish. But just wait until you see what I've brought him in this teak-wood box!

ROSENGARTEN—It's really too thoughtful of you to come away out here, Duchess! [*Takes box from her and places it on table.*]

DUCHESS—Why, but of course! We would all have been here sooner, if it hadn't been for my Charity Auction Sale at the Ritz for starving Austrian babies. [*To the DOCTOR.*] You are the "*Médecin Chef*," I suppose? [*Shaking hands and looking earnestly into his eyes.*] You have such a kind face, I'm sure you'll take the best of care of our poor wonderful Mervyn.

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ROSENGARTEN—The Duchess of Mandelieu, Doctor, is the patron saint of suffering humanity.

DUCHESS—Oh, but we have to look after our babies, even if they are enemy babies! Don't we, Doctor?

DOCTOR—[*Embarrassed and self-conscious.*] Er—you are quite right—er—Madam.

DUCHESS—You know I've done my bit; I have a baby. But you couldn't expect Mr. Van Loon or Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson to understand; they've never had any.

LEVINESON—[*With his usual bored drawl.*] Where shall I put this damned bird-cage?

DUCHESS—[*Maliciously.*] Now, don't be cross, Van Rensselaer. You see, Doctor, it always makes Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson furious when I talk about babies. He only fathers books.

VAN LOON—[*Gallantly.*] Our Duchess mothers both.

DUCHESS—[*Opening box.*] Darling Normie! Now you'll all see what's in the box. Doctor, it's going to cure Mervyn, you know.

HEAD DOCTOR—Why, what can it be? I'm most curious!

DUCHESS—[*Taking large jade elephant out of box and holding it out for general admiration.*] See! isn't he beautiful? A Chinese jade elephant of the Kien Lung period! Isn't it, Van Rensselaer? We will now christen him Mumbo Jumbo.

VAN LOON—Oh! Gloria, what a wonderful name for him! Of course! Mumbo Jumbo.

DUCHESS—[*Showing elephant to DOCTOR.*] I'm

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sure you never thought of curing your patients with a jade elephant, now, did you?

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Smiling.*] No: that's a new idea, I must admit.

DUCHESS—But it's a wonderful idea! A few years ago, when our Normie—Mr. Van Loon, you know—was frightfully upset, and neurasthenic over the terrible war, and all Paris thought he was quite mad——

VAN LOON—Oh, I say!

DUCHESS—I cured him entirely with an elephant. Didn't I, Normie?

VAN LOON—You certainly did, my dear Gloria.

DUCHESS—It was an intimate friend of mine, a famous Yogi, who explained to me, when I was in India shooting tigers, the exact science of stroking jade elephants at sunrise and sunset. It's all so mysterious and mystical. But I'll show you all that later, Doctor, and you can try it on your patients.

HEAD DOCTOR—I'll be delighted to become your pupil, D—D—Duchess.

DUCHESS—But, Normie, where's the Virgin? I told MacGhee to bring in the Virgin.

VAN LOON—I'll just see. [*He goes out.*]

DUCHESS—You can't imagine what a time I had to get the Virgin from Mr. Packer. Poor Mrs. Packer has been in hysterics all day. You know, Doctor, the moment dear Mervyn broke down in his speech he cried out to the Virgin for help. . . . It was too pitiful—too terribly tragic.

ROSENGARTEN—[*To DOCTOR.*] The Duchess is referring to a statue of the Virgin in Mr. Packer's gallery.

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HEAD DOCTOR—[*Less bewildered.*] Ah, I see!

DUCHESS—Yes, and I finally persuaded Mr. Packer that Mervyn absolutely needed his Virgin to get well. [VAN LOON *returns, followed by a diminutive, fat, balloon-like, claret-faced chauffeur and a tall English footman. Both are dressed in the Mandelieu liveries, covered with braid and silver buttons embossed with ducal coronets. They carry in Virgin between them.*] Ah! there she is. [To chauffeur.] MacGhee, be careful; don't drop her. Put her there on the table. [Impatiently.] Normie, quickly take off your gold-fish, and your cage, Van Rensselaer. No, no, MacGhee; how stupid! Turn her face towards the bed—like that!

MACGHEE—Yes, your Grace. [*Touches cap.*]

DUCHESS—[*Waving servants away.*] There, that's all! That's all! [*Exeunt servants.*] What an idea! [*With mock intensity.*] Imagine putting a Virgin with her back to the bed! But MacGhee's a good old thing, and he has the grotesque chic of a little fat sea monster or a hobgoblin—but such a snob. [*General laughter.*]

VAN LOON—Good servants are always snobs, Gloria.

DUCHESS—But he's even a rank Royalist, Normie! It's so amusing to be a Socialist oneself and have a Royalist as chauffeur. You know I'm a Socialist, Doctor!

LEVINESON—The most exclusive Socialists nowadays have Royalist chauffeurs.

DUCHESS—[*Admiring Virgin.*] There, isn't she divine! You've never had a fifteenth-century Della Quercia Virgin here before, have you, Doctor?

LEVINESON—[*Adjusting his monocle and looking*

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about room.] It's rather an odd place for gold-fish, a nightingale, an elephant, and a Primitive Virgin.

DUCHESS—Odd place! Why, Van Rensselaer? You see, Doctor, Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson is so absorbed in his books that he has no understanding of suffering humanity at all. To really understand the sufferings of others one must have suffered oneself.

HEAD DOCTOR—I see you are a psychologist, Duchess.

DUCHESS—Of course Normie and I understand. We worked in the war hospitals, but Van Rensselaer absolutely refused. He said the bad odours drove away all thoughts of his Italian Primitives.

LEVINESON—To say the least, it is difficult to combine primitive odour with primitive art.

DUCHESS—You hear that, Doctor? I'm sure he doesn't even appreciate the tragedy of last night. Think of it! The greatest painter of the century being suddenly clouded by madness! It's like an eclipse, for art is sunlight. Without art we would be groping in the night. Speak up, Normie! Isn't that true?

VAN LOON—[*Sententiously.*] To me, last night was the most heart-rending scene I've ever witnessed. I saw nothing more dramatic during the entire war, and I was in Paris the whole time.

LEVINESON—[*Aside.*] Except when he ran to Bordeaux and became a "Tournedos à la Bordelaise."

DUCHESS—Bravo! I love Normie for his big heart. You see, we understand each other perfectly, as I'm an oxygen woman, and he's a nitrogen man, which is

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the latest scientific theory of sympathy, as the Doctor can tell us.

HEAD DOCTOR—Well—er—er—— [*Door opens, and INTERNE, carrying MERVYN's travelling-bag, ushers in KOUGELMAN, who is holding MERVYN by the arm. A hush falls over everyone, and after a moment of general suspense ROSENGARTEN steps forward and, taking MERVYN by the arm, gently leads him to large chair in centre of room. INTERNE places bag on chair near bed and goes out.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Soothingly.*] We've all been waiting for you, my dear boy; sit down here. [*MERVYN sits down docilely.*] Your friends have all come to see you.

MERVYN—[*After looking about in silence.*] Oh, there's my fairy godmother!

DUCHESS—[*Talking to him as if he were a small child.*] Yes, dear, your fairy godmother has brought you a pretty present. [*She hastens to fetch teak-wood box, and drops to her knees beside his chair.*] There, now, open the box and see what's inside. [*While MERVYN is opening box she exchanges glances of compassionate sympathy with VAN LOON.*]

MERVYN—[*Taking elephant from box, with surprised pleasure.*] Oh, it's a beautiful elephant, like the one I love so in the circus!

KOUGELMAN—[*Who, since his entrance, has been nervously mopping great beads of perspiration from his brow. Aside to ROSENGARTEN, breathlessly.*] God! we had the most terrible time! You can't imagine what it was shaking off the reporters—and camera men forcing their way into our rooms, and crowds of hysterical women fighting like maniacs in the corridors

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—telephones ringing—telegrams—and the secretaries losing their heads! The police finally got us out by the back entrance. I almost went out of my mind!

ROSENGARTEN—[*Smiling sympathetically.*] As usual, Isaac.

DUCHESS—[*Who has been showing MERVYN the elephant.*] Now wait till you see what Mr. Van Loon has brought you. Normie, bring your present.

VAN LOON—[*Nervous and embarrassed, walks towards MERVYN, swinging bowl of gold-fish suspended on gilded chain.*] We thought—er—you would like—er—to watch the shimmering, eh—iridescent colours of these gold-fish in the sunlight.

MERVYN—[*Simply and naturally.*] Oh, thank you so much, Mr. Van Loon! How beautiful they are!

DUCHESS—[*Holding up bird-cage.*] And here's a wonderful nightingale that your dear friend, Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levinson, has brought you. He'll sing to you every morning.

MERVYN—[*Getting up with elephant clasped in his arms.*] A nightingale! Oh, Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levinson, how kind of you! Marie loved nightingales. [*Suddenly noticing Virgin with delight.*] But there she is! She always comes to me! It makes me feel so happy that she never forgets me, and is near me all the time.

DUCHESS—[*Aside to ROSENGARTEN and others.*] You see how right I was. I understood. And see how he loves his elephant too!

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Amused, and with more self-assurance.*] Duchess, I may have to call on you to treat our other patients.

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DUCHESS—Oh, but I'm coming out here often now. [*Glances at wrist watch.*] Heavens! how late it is. I must fly. The English Ambassador will be waiting. He particularly wanted to see me before dinner to talk over the Irish question. Valera is an intimate friend of mine, you know. And after the Opera, what do you think I'm going to do?

VAN LOON—That would be difficult to predict, Gloria.

LEVINESON—[*Dryly.*] Only a fool would try.

DUCHESS—Aren't you both rude! Well, I'm taking the midnight train to Washington, to confer with the President about conditions in Russia. I received an urgent telegram this morning from the Secretary of State, begging me to come immediately.

VAN LOON—He must have been reading your brilliant articles in *The New Republic* and *The Nation*.

LEVINESON—[*Aside.*] My brilliant articles!

DUCHESS—And I have another appearing in *The Call* next week. You must read them, Doctor. I'll send them to you, for I'm sure that you, like all of us, are a "*New Republic* sort of person," aren't you?

HEAD DOCTOR—Well—eh—I'm sure to become one after I've read your articles, Duchess.

DUCHESS—I'm certain you will, Doctor, for you already look like one. Van Rensselaer, are you coming with us?

LEVINESON—No; but I'll drop into your opera box later on for the last act of *Walküre*.

DUCHESS—[*Walks over to MERVYN, who is fascinated by nightingale.*] I knew you'd love him. [*Kissing him theatrically on forehead.*] Your fairy

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godmother will be back very soon. [*To ROSENGARTEN, impressively.*] Telephone me how he is to-morrow, Mr. Rosengarten. [*To KOUGELMAN.*] Au revoir! Good afternoon, Doctor! [*With hushed voice, while shaking hands with him.*] If only you had known Mervyn before! You can't imagine how painful it is for me to see him like this. He was the most brilliant conversationalist I've ever met. Brilliant—perfectly scintillating! you know.

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Opening door for DUCHESS and following her out.*] It's certainly a pitiful case, but we'll do our best. [*Exeunt both.*]

VAN LOON—[*Under his breath, with histrionic emotion, looking at MERVYN.*] Sublime genius, gone for ever. [*Aloud, with affected cheerfulness.*] Good-bye, dear friend! [*Waving his hand to MERVYN, and including others.*] Good-bye! Later at the Opera, Van Rensselaer. [*He hurries out after DUCHESS.*]

LEVINESON—[*Nods to VAN LOON, then under his breath.*] Old leech! [*Supper bell is heard.*] I remained to have a talk with you, Rosengarten, about the general situation.

KOUGELMAN—Yes, Levineson, we'd better talk things over.

LEVINESON—Van Rensselaer-Levineson, please.

KOUGELMAN—[*Smiling.*] Of course. I always forget!

INTERNE—[*Entering room.*] The supper bell has rung, Mr. Rosengarten; I'll take Mr. Mervyn into the dining-room.

ROSENGARTEN—[*To MERVYN.*] Go with this kind gentleman, dear Mervyn; it's time for supper.

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MERVYN—Yes, Mr. Rosengarten. You're not going away?

ROSENGARTEN—Oh no! We'll be here when you come back.

INTERNE—[*Leading MERVYN out by arm.*] I'm sure you're going to like it here; we have such a lovely garden. I'll show it you to-morrow.

MERVYN—Like my little garden in France?

INTERNE—Yes, yes. [*They go out together.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Clearing his throat and lighting a cigarette.*] Well, what's to happen now?

LEVINESON—[*Ironically.*] I suppose Mr. Mervyn will remain here a certain time at our expense, and then be sent back home?

ROSENGARTEN—[*With pointed emphasis to LEVINESON.*] Yes, at *our* expense. Under the circumstances, I think we can afford it.

KOUGELMAN—[*Apprehensively.*] From what I gather, this is about the most expensive sanatorium in the country.

LEVINESON—[*Sarcastically.*] Our friend Rosengarten seems to like to do things on a large scale.

ROSENGARTEN—That comes, perhaps, from seeing the disastrous consequences of things done on a small scale.

LEVINESON—The scale, I think, should depend largely on the profits.

ROSENGARTEN—Excellent business acumen! We entirely agree. And since our profits amount to—— [*To KOUGELMAN.*] About how much, Isaac?

KOUGELMAN—In round figures I should say a

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million, as we've sold about a hundred pictures, averaging ten thousand dollars apiece.

ROSENGARTEN—But our profits don't stop there!

KOUGELMAN—No; for as Mervyn is now dead in the eyes of the world, we can sell his remaining pictures for three times what we've been asking for them.

LEVINESON—[*Smiling sardonically.*] The grave is not as beneficial to doctors as it is to undertakers and picture-dealers.

ROSENGARTEN—Or to art critics and other literary scavengers. [*Offering cigarette.*] A cigarette? [LEVINESON *hesitates for a moment, and then takes cigarette with a venomous smile.*]

KOUGELMAN—[*Clearing his throat, with hopes of clearing the atmosphere.*] Ahem . . . Well, as I was saying, I think we'll net, all told, about a million and a half.

ROSENGARTEN—Which will allow us to give a substantial present to Mervyn's mother.

LEVINESON—[*Sarcastically.*] Do you think that necessary?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Innocently.*] Don't you?

KOUGELMAN—[*With nervous apprehension.*] I suppose you would certainly consider ten thousand dollars very substantial; wouldn't you, J.R.?

LEVINESON—[*Emphatically.*] Ridiculously substantial, I should say!

ROSENGARTEN—[*Slowly and decisively.*] Well, gentlemen, I propose to see that the old lady and Mervyn get one hundred thousand dollars, at least.

KOUGELMAN—[*Dumbfounded.*] One hundred thousand dollars! Are you mad?

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LEVINESON—[*Suddenly straightening himself in his chair and losing his usual blasé manner.*] Preposterous! Insane! Idiotic!

ROSENGARTEN—[*Buoyantly.*] Well, if you are both dissatisfied with my suggestion, which, by the way, I intend to insist upon, why not make another million and a half? It would be even simpler this time.

KOUGELMAN—[*Staggered.*] Another million and a half? [*Under his breath.*] What's coming now?

ROSENGARTEN—Why not? We will merely have Mervyn continue to paint, and this time we'll exploit him as a madman, who has, nevertheless, retained his genius for painting. Van Rensselaer-Levineson will write another book, which he might call, let us say, *Creative Madness*. Our scientists and art critics, ever eager for self-advertisement and notoriety, will be delighted to do the rest through the Press.

KOUGELMAN—[*Regretfully.*] I really believe you could do it, J.R., but my nerves couldn't stand the strain.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Pacing up and down, smoking cigarette.*] It's up to you two to decide. But when I think of our President solemnly declaring that there was such a thing as being "too proud to fight," and then plunging us into war "to end all wars," with the slogan "of making the world safe for Democracy"; . . . and Mr. Ford, while twenty-three nations were fighting, gaily sailing forth from New York, to end the world war and restore brotherly love, in his Ark of Peace bedecked with olive branches, lilies, and stuffed turtle-doves dangling in the companion-way; . . . or Thomas, the English Labour leader, who declared, with

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tears trickling down his cheeks, on the morning of the great coal-strike which almost ruined England, and which he had organized and carefully brought about, that "it was the saddest day of his life"; . . . and when I see Mr. H. G. Wells, the most successful literary financier the world has ever seen, accepted as seer and philosopher; . . . and Sir Oliver Lodge, England's celebrated scientist, writing that his dead son is clamouring from a spirit-world for a Ford car and a good cigar, . . . I can't see why—since we are living in an epoch when statecraft, business, science and letters are in the hands of these and other equally picturesque leaders—you should foresee the slightest difficulty in realizing my proposition.

LEVINESON—[*Who has regained his composure and English drawl, rising.*] Perhaps not; but the world will have to be satisfied, I think, with one book from me on Mervyn. I must be off now, as I'm dining to-night with the Prince of San Martino. I trust, however, that you will reconsider your philanthropic outburst. But we will discuss that later. [*Dryly.*] Good night!

KOUGELMAN—Good night, Levineson-Van Rensselaer—I mean Van Rensselaer-Levineson! [LEVINESON *goes out, adjusting his monocle.*] What a rotter! Of course I'll stand with you about the hundred thousand, J.R., if you feel that way about it.

ROSENGARTEN—I know I can always count on you, Isaac, to do the right thing.

KOUGELMAN—[*Mournfully.*] It's pretty hard for me to think, though, that a hundred thousand dollars is the right thing.

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ROSENGARTEN—My dear friend, we are exploiters, if you will, but not crooks, for while benefiting ourselves we also benefit our dupes.

KOUGELMAN—We've certainly benefited Mervyn!

ROSENGARTEN—[*In a spirit of self-justification.*] The political chameleons are the crooks. There you have the real criminal exploiters, who call themselves Socialists and altruists, and sputter about self-sacrifice, and yet wouldn't hesitate for an instant, in order to gratify their personal ambitions, to drag their befuddled dupes through bloodshed and every conceivable horror. The tragic farce of it all is, that these traitors to humanity are immortalized in literature, bronze and marble, and go down into history as public benefactors.

KOUGELMAN—I think you are right.

ROSENGARTEN—Personally, I'm inclined to believe that all Utopian uplifters and public welfare prattlers are either scoundrels or opportunists or egomaniacs. [*Enter HEAD DOCTOR, leaving door open behind him.*]

HEAD DOCTOR—I suppose, Mr. Rosengarten, that you would like to see Mr. Mervyn before you leave?

ROSENGARTEN—Yes, we're waiting to say good night.

HEAD DOCTOR—He's already made friends at table with our most amusing inmate. We call him Don Quichote. He was an artist before he became our patient.

ROSENGARTEN—He surely can't equal Mr. Wana-maker?

HEAD DOCTOR—I assure you he's even better. Wait till you hear him on Democracy and Science.

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KOUGELMAN—[*Surprised, to DOCTOR.*] Is Mr. Wanamaker one of your patients?

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Laughing.*] No! but we have one who thinks he's Mr. Wanamaker. [MERVYN and DON QUICHOTE appear in doorway, and enter room arm in arm.]

MERVYN—This is my new friend. I like him very much.

DON QUICHOTE—[*Tall, gaunt, and emaciated. The length of his long narrow pale face is accentuated by a pointed grizzly beard and drooping moustachios. From under overhanging shaggy brows his deep-set black eyes flash with fanatical fervour. His iron-grey hair bristles with courage, defiance and sincerity. He is enveloped in a shabby old black Spanish cape with wide velvet collar, worn and greasy. One end of the cape is gallantly tossed back over his left shoulder. He strikingly resembles the "Knight of the Sad Countenance." With a sweeping gesture towards MERVYN.*] At last I've met an honest man. He tells me the world calls him a genius, but that he's only a poor fool. [KOUGELMAN's large pearl scarf-pin suddenly rivets his attention. He assumes a majestic pose, and with arm outstretched, pointing towards the pin, he announces rhetorically.] That's a Tecla!

KOUGELMAN—[*Taken off his guard, gives himself away by putting his hand involuntarily to his scarf-pin.*] My pearl! How do you know?

DON QUICHOTE—Because everything now is sham and imitation. Even the food we eat is tricked, artificial. Our very characters are tampered with. We are no longer allowed to be ourselves, but are forced to

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affect standardized personalities; and the magazines and newspapers, with catch-phrases and illustrations, drive their advertisements into our brains of how to be successful in business; of ingratiating society table-talk; of how to appear cleverer, richer or better born than you are—in fact, of how to pretend, to fool others, and be what you're not.

ROSENGARTEN—Bravo! Sir Knight.

HEAD DOCTOR—Bravo! Don Quichote.

DON QUICHOTE—[*Firing up under applause.*] It's all humbug, deception, counterfeit, cheat, untruth. The whole thing's a lie. We live in lies, buy and sell lies, defend lies, fight for lies, die for lies. Science has ruined us, degenerated us. We're starved out—lost! Humanity has become rotten. We have sunk to such depths of materialism and are so steeped in decadence that even our artists and poets turn from nature to science for inspiration. We now have paintings of machinery, machine-shop music, and odes to carburettors, boilers, pistons and spark-plugs. It's no longer "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," but "Blessed are the pure in science, for they shall see machines."

ROSENGARTEN—Hear! hear!

DON QUICHOTE—Before science there was faith—men believed; there was hope, happiness, love, chivalry, legend; there was art—true art. Truth lies in faith, which is limitless, and faith is the only approach to Heaven, to God; for God is Truth! Look at the Tower of Babel, the first scientific attempt to get to Paradise—to obtain truth. A babbling chaos was the result. For the last century scientists have been

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building up another Tower of Babel, which is crumbling. And we are now left in despair with devilish machinery in the ghastly gloom of scientific jargon, under grimy skies, in a world of newspapers, magazines, sky-scrapers, factories and bill-boards. [*Looking from one to the other he finally fixes MERVYN.*] Do you know why the Devil was expelled from Heaven?

MERVYN [*Quietly.*] Because old Ellen said he was a wicked angel.

DON QUICHOTE—[*Continues, oblivious to answer.*] Because he was the first scientist and democrat; because he tried to introduce science and democracy into the Kingdom of Heaven. And out of his scientific Hell have come these factories, sweatshops, and monstrous machines, which have annihilated segregation, without which art must perish, and have ground us into slaves of standardization, seriality, monotony, equality. We have been flattened out into the same pattern—into identicalism. We dress alike, look alike, act alike. We are alike. The possibility of aloofness, and even the sanctity of our privacy, wherein alone can bloom faith, love, dream, imagination and individuality, have been stolen from us by the telephone, telegraph, wireless, motor, press, camera. And science, by enslaving us with senseless, useless activities, has robbed us of the greatest of all luxuries—leisure. It was the Devil, that scientific proletarian, who invented equality and democracy, in order to combat nature's sublime inequality and infinite variety, which are the works of God. [*Suddenly pointing to KUGELMAN.*]. And what do you think the Devil's latest propaganda is?

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KOUGELMAN—[*Embarrassed, again involuntarily puts his hand to his scarf-pin.*] I—er—can't imagine!

ROSENGARTEN—He's certainly a lively propagandist.

DON QUICHOTE—It's to fool us into thinking that Christ was a scientific Socialist. And what, I ask you, could be more unspiritual, more unchristian, than science? He has, nevertheless, caught in his net millions of poor gullible ones, who call themselves Scientific Christians and Christian Scientists and Socialists. And these poor creatures think they are following in the paths of that Holy Poet, that supreme aristocrat, the thirty-second descendant of the Royal House of David, who said, "To those who have shall be given, and from those who have not, shall be taken away, even the little that they have." That's art, aristocracy, religion, true biology—GOD—the antithesis of science, democracy and atheism. These are the microbes with which the Devil, through his agents, infects the weak-minded, the envious, treacherous, the unimaginative, who are always ready to serve him. [*Same sinister laughter is heard in distance.*]

HEAD DOCTOR—He's laughing at you, Don Quichote.

DON QUICHOTE—[*With haughty dignity.*] The ignoble and the mean of spirit will always laugh at me. For I preach palaces and hovels, drones and workers, intelligence and stupidity, genius and idiocy, beauty and ugliness, morality and immorality, success and failure, light and shadow, rain and sunshine, tears and laughter, love and hatred, Heaven and Hell.

HEAD DOCTOR—[*Seizing this opportunity to end tirade, jumps up.*] Splendid, Don Quichote! I congratulate you!

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ROSENGARTEN—[*Shaking his hand with enthusiasm.*] Magnificent! A supreme doctrine! I hope we'll meet often, Sir Knight.

HEAD DOCTOR—[*To DON QUICHOTE.*] Well, now we must say good night. [*To ROSENGARTEN.*] We keep early hours here, you know.

DON QUICHOTE—[*Silencing DOCTOR with uplifted hand, and with voice of deep melancholy.*] I thank you all for your extreme courtesy, and the appreciation you have shown to an artist, aristocrat, soldier, lover and believer, who has had his heart broken by the levelling brutality of democracy, and his brain shattered by the cold-blooded viciousness of science, but whose spirit for ever remains inviolate and undaunted. [*With a royal gesture.*] Gentlemen, I salute you. I have the honour to bid you farewell. [*He makes a low bow, and with supreme dignity withdraws.*]

HEAD DOCTOR—I knew he'd amuse you.

ROSENGARTEN—[*Pensively.*] Extraordinary! Amazing!

HEAD DOCTOR—[*To MERVYN.*] Mr. Mervyn, if you'll prepare yourself for bed, I'll be in later.

ROSENGARTEN—We'll stay only a minute, Doctor. [DOCTOR nods and goes out.]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Shaking his finger at KOUGELMAN.*] Ah, Isaac, you fooled us all with your Maharajah pearl, but it took a madman to detect it!

KOUGELMAN—[*Nettled.*] Only a fool could have! [*He begins to unpack MERVYN's bag, and lays out dressing-gown on the bed.*]

ROSENGARTEN—[*Smiling.*] Well, I didn't. [*Turning to MERVYN.*] And now, dear boy, we're going to

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leave you here to-night, but we'll be back to-morrow. And when you are rested, and feeling stronger, we're going to take you home to your mother and old Ellen in France. [*Holding his hand affectionately.*] That will make you happy, won't it?

MERVYN—Oh yes, very happy! But you and Mr. Kougelman will come and live with us too, won't you?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Deeply touched.*] Of course we'll always see each other. Now good night, dear boy! Sleep well, and happy dreams. [*Kisses him on brow.*]

KOUGELMAN—I've arranged all your things for you, Mervyn.

MERVYN—Oh, thank you, Mr. Kougelman! You will come back to-morrow?

ROSENGARTEN—[*Waving hand from door.*] Yes, to-morrow. [*He goes out, followed by KOUGELMAN.*]

MERVYN—[*Left alone, slowly divests himself of his coat, collar and tie, leaving his throat bare. As he puts on white dressing-gown he gazes rapturously at the statue of the Virgin, which is enveloped in a flood of moonlight, streaming in from the garden window. The statue again appears to be miraculously illuminated. He then sinks quietly to his knees and joins his hands in prayer. The light from the shaded electric lamp on his night-table falls full on his face. After a moment's pause he slowly and dreamily begins his evening prayer.*]

“Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child.
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee.”

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God bless Mother, and old Ellen, and my Father, and little cousin Marie, who are with you in Heaven. And please, dear God, take me back soon to our little garden in France, and make me a poor fool again. I'm so very, very tired of being a genius. And God bless my Fairy Godmother and my dear kind friends, Mr. Joseph Rosengarten and Mr. Isaac Kougelman and Mr. Van Rensselaer-Levineson, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

[As curtain slowly descends, sounds of weeping are heard as before, followed by the same sinister laughter.]

LA NAPOULE, 1921-1922.

